DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 229 894 EC 151 691

AUTHOR	Cuninggim, Whitty, Ed.; Mulligan, Dorothy, Ed.
TITLE	Volunteers and Children with Special Needs. Second Edition.
INSTITUTION	National School Volunteer Program, Inc., Alexandria, Va.
SPONS AGENCY	Shell Companies Foundation, New York, N.Y.
PUB DATE	79
NOTE	76p.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Academic Achievement; Elementary Secondary Education; Guides; Kindergarten Children; *Listening Skills; Mainstreaming; *Mild Disabilities; Resource Materials; *Screening Tests; *Skill Development; *Volunteer Training

ABSTRACT

The resource manual is intended for school volunteers who help regular classroom teachers with mildly handicapped children. Chapter 1 briefly describes the purpose and development of the manual. Chapter 2, on kindergarten screening, begins with a discussion of the importance of early screening and followup, by G. Schiffman, then presents such aspects of the Houston Kindergarten Screening Program as the instructions for language learning screening (in English and Spanish) and a chart of volunteer activities to help language development. Chapter 3 describes the "Listener Program," which involves pairing a warm, "listening" adult with a child who needs adult attention to develop self confidence. The chapter also includes orientation and training procedures, the text of a speech, "Rochester's Primary Mental Health Project," by E. Cowen; the volunteer guide "Effective Learning Skills: A Handbook for Listeners," by J. Jones; and "The Very Special Me I'm Glad to Be Book," a booklet for use by child and listener. The last chapter includes a handbook with suggestions for volunteers to use when helping children learn academic skills, and activities for such areas as perception, gross motor development, language math, study skill improvement, and career planning. (MC)

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Volunteers and Children with Special Needs

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NSVP

Volunteers and Children with Special Needs

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This second edition of our resource manual has been made possible by a grant from the Shell Companies Foundation, Inc.

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About the Program

The National School Volunteer Program, Inc. (NSVP), has initiated a major new project to help volunteers assist professional educators in implementing PL 94-142, the "Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975," which requires "a free appropriate public education" for all children.

The project grew out of the conviction of Whitty Cuninggim, NSVP Board member, that NSVP and school volunteers can make a major contribution to the education of handicapped children. Whitty and other Board members also believe that local volunteers can help communities avoid the resentment, frustration and backlash which occur when federally-mandated services conflict with constrained local budgets and the trend toward retrenchment of services.

The number of volunteers who work in schools has grown dramatically in recent years; a poll indicates that as many as 2.3 million persons serve education on an average of six hours per week, and most of these give direct service to children.

Through the varied experiences of its member programs, NSVP has amassed a wealth of materials, information, ideas and techniques which volunteers use to help children and teachers. This resource manual is our attempt to share this wealth with school districts everywhere. The materials blend the perspectives of many school volunteer programs and districts which have taken new paths in their efforts to serve children.

The materials and programs included in this book are designed to help mildly handicapped children who may be found in every classroom— children who are not succeeding at school. Their handicaps are often invisible. Many are performing below grade level in every subject. Some may need extra help only in reading or only in math. Some are young children who need language stimulation; others need a boost in self confidence. Volunteers can help the teacher to give these children the extra care and attention they need so badly.

This resource manual was compiled and edited by Whitty Cuninggim and Dorothy Mulligan, NSVP's Director of Editorial Services. We acknowledge the assistance of Dr. Dudley Shearburn, Director of the Center for Special Education of Salem College, Winston-Salem, N.C.; Karen Haywood of the Department of Special Education, Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Public Schools; Kay Shields, Winston-Salem coordinator of school volunteers; Sandra Alcorn of Communications Group, Inc., Alexandia, Va; and Nancy Noel, Fairfax County, Va., learning disabilities resource teacher.

We also thank these other contributors to this resource manual:

Dr. Emory Cowen of the University of Rochester, for permission to use his speech about the Rochester Primary Mental Health Project;

Dr. Gilbert Schiffman, Professor of Education at The Johns Hopkins University and former Director of the U.S. Right to Read Program, for his contribution to Chapter II;

John Posey, Manager of Corporate Contributions for McDonald's Corporation, who serves on our Advisory Panel for the project; a donation from McDonald's Corporation made possible the printing of the first edition of this resource manual;

Jean Myers, Director of the Volunteers In Public Schools (VIPS) program of the Houston Independent School District, and to the Houston school system for permission to use its kindergarten screening instrument;

Charlotte Sherrod, coordinator of the school volunteer program in Fort Worth, Texas, and Dr. Reba Jones, Director of Fort Worth's Growth Center, for permission to use materials from the Growth Center;

Dr. Joyce Jones of the University of North Florida, for permission to adapt her excellent booklet which has become *Effective Listening Skills*.

William Schipper, Associate Director of the National Association of State Directors of Special Education, for invaluable advice on the training manual;

Dr. James Payne of the University of Virginia, who served on NSVP's Advisory Panel for this project, and other members of the Education Committee of the National Association for Retarded Citizens who critiqued an early draft of the manual;

Other members of the Advisory Panel, who gave generously of their time and expertise; and

Hundreds of school volunteer program coordinators, whose materials we admire and adapted for inclusion here.

This second edition has been made possible through the generosity of the Shell Companies Foundation and the interest shown in the publication by Doris O'Connor, Senior Vice President.

Robin Spaulding
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Who Needs a Volunteer?

I always wanted to be a teacher. I'd picture me and my class—teaching, learning. The children are bright-eyed with expectation. They like me and I like them. I teach well and they learn.

Ten years later I smile at that dream. I teach, and I love teaching, but my job is very different from the vision I had when I took my first teaching job.

My class—my children—whether 15, or 10, or 30, is a group, with all the characteristics of a group. They are chatty, even boisterous with disagreements. But there are 15, or 20, or 30 different personalities, backgrounds, learning styles and needs in this classroom. Each child also has parents who are an integral part of his or her life and meaning.

I am given guidelines on teaching responsibilities—by our state department of education, by the local school district, and by my principal. Each subject area has specific learning objectives, and there's plenty of paperwork. Then there are other school tasks, such as the daily lunch count, collecting picture money, finding overdue library books, patrol and bus duty—the list goes on and on.

In my eight-hour work day I must plan, prepare and organize materials and communicate and evaluate the program for the group according to the individual needs and learning patterns of EACH student and that in turn according to established guidelines, giving consideration to parental concerns. Then there are the lesson plans to prepare each day, and meetings about curriculum changes. I must gather information and materials, test pupils, prepare accountability statements, schedule and hold parent conferences. I must attend in-service training sessions, correct papers, and run spirit masters. There's still the teaching to do—the actual stand-up (or sit down) instruction with the group or with an individual child. Every day there is so much to do. And always, I want to do a good job—the best!

Some days I get very discouraged: there never seems to be enough time. I never feel fully prepared. I can't find the answer for every child's problem. There's always something I didn't do or could have done better.

Who needs a volunteer? I do. I need someone who likes children as much as I do, someone who has the time to listen to a child read or help with make-up work.

And the children need a volunteer—someone who has the time to listen and talk to them, to help them learn and grow. They need another adult friend who will share their dreams and thoughts, just as I do.

Chapter One:

How the Volunteer Can Help

Education for children with various handicapping conditions is undergoing revolutionary change in the United States. For many years such children were dependent on their families, except for the benefits of a relatively few institutions usually founded by the state or federal government. As long as this country's economy was basically agricultural and unskilled jobs were plentiful, many of the mildly handicapped were able to blend into the mainstream and live lives of independence and dignity.

However, times changed. Society became increasingly technological, demanding more sophisticated job skills; schooling became compulsory, often before appropriate materials and teaching skills were available for certain children; and standardized IQ tests which measured intellectual functioning in reading, arithmetic, and comprehension increased the trend to set some children apart from their peers. (This was particularly true for children who came from backgrounds which were different in language and culture.) In general, children with special educational problems were barred from school, or, if they were able to obtain educational services, were often isolated from their peers and put into separate classes.

In the past 30 years, local pressures in many districts have resulted in added programs for certain special children. Retarded children were usually the first to benefit. Some school districts gave tuition grants to specific children for educational services by other agencies, but this was challenged in the courts as discrimination against those children. Courts in the 1970's, notably in Pennsylvania and the District of Columbia, upheld the right of exceptional children to an education, a guarantee of due process and regular evaluation of their programs. This meant that these children could go to public schools. Many of them no longer needed to live in institutions.

When it passed the "Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975," Public Law 94-142, the federal government took a giant step toward meeting the educational needs of several million handicapped children and youth who were not being served at all or were not being served properly. This Act recognizes that all children are due a free and appropriate public education in a setting which is conducive to maximum learning and growth. Such an education gives them the best chance of reaching their potential and of becoming productive citizens. Many states passed similar laws.

PL 94-142 mandates educational services to any handicapped child between the ages of 3 and 18 by September 1978, and for those between the ages of 3 and 21 by September 1980. (However, this does not apply to ages 3-5 and 18-21 if the requirement is inconsistent with state law or practice.)

The law also states that parents, guardians, or surrogate parents, and when appropriate the students themselves, must have a part in planning Individualized Education Programs, often called IEP's. By federal regulation, the IEP will include these elements:

1. A statement of the child's present level of educational performance;
2. A statement of yearly educational *goals*, and some short-term instructional *objectives* for that child;
3. A statement about the specific special education and other services to be provided to the child, along with information about the child's participation in the regular educational program;
4. Estimated dates for special services to begin and how long they will last;
5. An appropriate evaluation procedure which can determine whether the educational objectives are being achieved—this is to be at least a yearly evaluation.

The IEP is a description of a student's program at the time it is written. It can be changed, improved, or modified as the need arises. The time required to write a plan for each child is often saved later since it provides the teacher, parent and others with a convenient map for the child's progress.

According to PL 94-142, these programs are to take place in the least restrictive environment that is appropriate, meaning that handicapped students shall be educated whenever possible with non-handicapped children.

Dedicated professionals and supportive citizens face a tremendous challenge if ideals and directives are to become reality. It follows that changes in placement and pilot projects will be frequent, and children with handicapping condi-

tions will be educated in various settings. In some cases, specialists will give extra help to teachers and children within the regular classroom. Success for these students will depend greatly on the training of teachers, the attitude of those teachers and of other students, and the availability of materials and additional personnel. Other children will spend part of a day in a resource room to receive individual or small group help with academic skills. And some children, because of the severity of their handicaps, will have to remain in separate classes.

Focus on mildly handicapped child

NSVP has chosen to focus on ways volunteers can help the mildly handicapped child for several reasons:

1. Mildly handicapped children comprise the largest number of students with special needs.
2. Many of these children can be mainstreamed if they get extra time and attention.
3. NSVP was able to develop this project because the experience and materials to help mildly handicapped children already existed in its member programs.

The National School Volunteer Program, Inc., is unique in that it provides linkages for member programs and school volunteers in cities and suburbs, towns and rural areas. Through its newsletter, conferences and publications, NSVP helps member programs and volunteers to share successful techniques and materials.

Unlike a generation ago, when most volunteers were parents, today's school volunteers come from many segments of the community. There are parents and grandparents, people who live near the school, high school and college students who earn academic credit for their volunteer work as they explore career options. Some are retired business executives who want to stay involved and who enjoy helping children learn. Some are employees of nearby businesses and industries who get released time to tutor or be classroom assistants. Volunteers work *only* at the request of and under the direction of teachers.

Some of the ways volunteers help with the education of handicapped children include:

- In Houston, more than 2000 volunteers are trained each September to screen that city's 12,000 kindergarten children to detect conditions which may hinder their ability to learn—hearing and visual impairment, problems with language, gross or fine motor development;
- In Miami, trained reading and math tutors worked with students in grades two to six who were one or more years below national norms; children who worked with volunteers gained significantly more in reading and math achievement than non-tutored students;
- In Los Angeles, 3000 older school volunteers perform a variety of tasks, including tutoring in reading, math and English as a second language, serving as classroom grandparents and classroom aides, helping with administrative tasks; many work with handicapped children;
- In Oakland, volunteers help primary children perfect motor skills by giving them an extra hour each week to work on balance beams and mats, performing programmed exercises in gymnastics;
- In Canton and Zanesville, Ohio, vision volunteers record learning materials, transcribe books into Braille, and supply tactile materials to train fingertips to perceive and comprehend;
- In San Francisco, the school volunteer program, in cooperation with eight companies, has formed Corporate Action for Public Schools. CAPS provides volunteer assistance in many forms, including released time for employees to work in the schools and help with career exploration;
- In Fort Worth, Texas, volunteers work on a one-to-one basis with children in a Growth Center Program which helps children improve their confidence and their ability to achieve in academic tasks;
- In rural Roane County, Tenn., 489 volunteers who served on a regular basis during the 1977-78 school year gave 55,078 hours (the equivalent of 52 fulltime persons working 30 hours a week with and for children); 87 hours of training were available to volunteers and 23 hours of in-service training were given to teachers.

In these ways and many others, volunteers extend the teacher's time for teaching. These citizen volunteers also reinforce existing skills and help students to improve socially and academically as they develop a sense of responsibility, independence and self worth. Volunteers see their time, patience, love and understanding pay off in a child's greater motivation to learn, better school attendance and improved achievement. Now is the time for this extra community resource to be brought to bear on the education of those who need it most—our children with special needs.

A three-pronged approach

NSVP has chosen three areas for its initial training projects: kindergarten screening, a Listener Program, and programs to build basic academic skills.

KINDERGARTEN SCREENING—Experts agree that some serious problems in later years, with their consequent emotional and financial drain, can be prevented by finding "high risk" children and giving them help at an early age. Volunteers do not diagnose—that is a job for professionals—but they can be trained to screen for symptoms which may indicate a problem. By early referral,

many children will avoid the experience of failure. If the child is found to have a problem, volunteers may work with the child as requested, especially in the area of language development on which so much academic success depends.

LISTENER PROGRAM—Parents and teachers have long known that children learn best when they are ready to learn and when they can adapt to the school environment. Teachers must often spend an undue amount of time with a few children—those who are too shy and withdrawn to learn, or those who have behavior problems, or children who face family crises. Many of these children need non-authoritative adult friends who can talk with them and share their experiences. Volunteers and teachers have found that learning improves when emotional needs of children are met. This is particularly true of children with handicapping conditions—hence NSVP's efforts in the Listener Program.

PROGRAMS TO BUILD BASIC ACADEMIC SKILLS—Many school volunteers are already working in this area—they provide extra drill, reinforcement and enrichment which teachers would give if they had the time. With the adoption of competency tests in many states, the training of volunteers to help students in reading, comprehension, writing, math and other practical skills of living has taken a quantum leap. Who needs this service more than the handicapped student who is trying to find a place of dignity in society?

About this resource manual

Through the years, school volunteers have worked most frequently with children in primary and intermediate grades. Activities for volunteers listed in this second edition of the resource manual reflect this emphasis, but NSVP is committed to providing continued support for students through adolescence, and has included such activities where possible. We shall continue to explore and develop ways in which volunteers can help high school students and welcome the experiences of others.

We have arranged the materials in this resource manual to meet the needs of our various audiences. Most of the book is intended for use by the volunteer coordinator or school administrator in setting up and improving programs which involve volunteers in helping handicapped children learn.

Three sections of this resource manual which we believe will be most helpful to parents and to volunteers are available separately from NSVP as a booklet, *Helping Children Learn—at School and at Home*. These sections are Effective Listening Skills, the handbook for Listeners in Chapter Three; the Handbook for Volunteers Who Help Children Learn, from Chapter Four; and How Volunteers Can Help, the section of volunteer-tested activities listed in Chapter Four.

NOTE: Many excellent school volunteers are male, and many children who benefit from volunteer services are female, but for clarity we have used "she" and "her" when referring to the volunteer and "he" and "him" to refer to the child.

Though laws and regulations require the listing of exceptional children by category (for example, "mentally retarded" or "learning disabled") before funding and services can be secured, NSVP has tried to avoid this practice. The materials in this manual attempt to help the citizen to work with students according to their academic needs and behavioral functioning, whatever they are. NSVP believes that demeaning labels are not necessary in order to meet the needs of all children in settings which are dignified and compassionate. Volunteers can do much to enhance this process.

Chapter Two:

Kindergarten Screening

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The Importance of Early Screening and Follow-Up

By Dr. Gilbert Schiffman,
Professor of Education and
Coordinator of Exceptional Children Program,
The Johns Hopkins University, and former
Director of the U.S. Right to Read Program

In the old days when I was a young reading teacher, we never worked with a kid who had a reading or learning problem before he got to fourth grade. We'd say, "Maybe he's a late bloomer." (And sometimes we had early faders, too.) What we said, in effect, was "Maybe he'll outgrow the problem."

Now, with lots of research and survey results in front of us, we know that we've lost a lot of ground if we wait that long to identify a reading problem and do something about it—that we're measurably ahead if we can identify these children early and give them the extra help they need so much.

We have learned that the child who doesn't get extra help until junior high has developed a negative attitude toward school and is frustrated by his poor performance. His parents are also unhappy with his progress, so now he has not one problem but two: he can't read on grade level and he has a poor opinion of himself.

Obviously, we can help more children and do a better job of helping them if we start early.

If only we could wave a magic wand or find a secret formula that would suddenly give every child a better chance to succeed in school! Where shall we begin, knowing what we've all observed personally and what research verifies?

Ideally, we should find children with learning problems very early in life, but we haven't found a good way to reach them in their homes at the pre-school level. But what can we do when they enter public schools at age five that will help them to live up to our expectations for them? And how can volunteers help the professionals—the teachers, administrators, guidance personnel and psychologists—to help children to succeed in school?

The Bayley Infant Test shows us that children at ages 9, 10 and 11 months of age are pretty much alike, but by the time they are 18 months to 2 and 2 1/2 years old, they start to differ. How they differ! They have such varying degrees of development in language, linguistics and cognitive development, not because of race, creed or religion, but because of differences in their home environments. Some of these kids have been read to as they sat on their parents' laps since they were born. They were cuddled and talked to and encouraged in so many ways to develop language through a variety of experiences and stimulation.

Some 2 1/2-year-olds have been to the zoo and the museum, have flown to Grandma's house on an airplane, and watched a lot of television—such rich learning experiences as "Sesame Street" and "The Electric Company," "Romper Room" and "Mr. Rogers." They can sing those TV commercials just as well as the children they see on the tube. These 2 1/2-year-olds have asked good questions and their curiosity has been rewarded with adult explanations and interaction. These children are very likely to succeed in learning to read, and they have good self images by the time they first enter that kindergarten classroom. They like it there and they are ready to make friends, to take turns. They and their teacher know they will do well. So most of them do!

But in the same classroom we may find a child who has never been read to at home. Maybe he has never been taken to see the river which is only six blocks from his home. He may not know much about animals because he's never had a picture book or been to the zoo or had a pet. He may watch a lot of television, but you don't develop language skills by

listening to TV all day. You need someone in the home to encourage you, to listen to you and question you—somebody to explain things about your neighborhood and your world.

Some children in preschool programs don't even know their names when they come to school the first time. Maybe nobody ever called them by name at home. Some children won't speak, even to another child, for weeks or months after they enter this new alien environment which is so different from the home they have known.

These children come to kindergarten that first September morning full of apprehension. Their language development is light years away from their classmates who have such rich home environments and such willing teachers as their parents. These children need help.

I would suggest that volunteers who can provide one-to-one enrichment for this second group of children on a continuing basis in the kindergarten room or somewhere else nearby might well become that secret formula or magic wand. They can encourage these children to practice talking by using toy telephones or puppets. A volunteer can help several children to act out "The Three Bears" after they've read it together, or play rhyming games or "Go Fish." A volunteer can hold a child in her lap and read "Dr. Seuss" or "Bread and Jam for Frances," and rock and talk together. She can ask the child to name all the things on the page that are round or brown or that have four legs.

A warm, caring adult friend who comes regularly to work with a specific child or group of children can work wonders in their development. These children need practice in using language and in hearing good language spoken. They need practice in thinking skills, such as finding which one of these objects is "not like the other." They need help to learn how to speak in complete sentences and to learn concepts such as "opposites." Volunteers can help these five-year-olds to learn to take turns and follow directions, as well as how to skip and how to button their jackets and tie their shoes.

Volunteers—parents and many other people from the community—when properly trained, properly supervised, and when teachers are trained in how to use these volunteers and want to use them—can make an overwhelming contribution. But these volunteers must be trained and supervised and they must feel good about what they are giving. And the teachers have got to want to use their services and know how to use volunteer time wisely so they will keep coming back.

Some years ago we showed a group of pediatricians a three-minute film clip of a young child's behavior, a five-year-old, to be specific. We asked them to rate the child's behavior on a five-point scale to determine whether the child was mature or immature, hyperactive or not. We got the most beautiful bell-shaped curve from these pediatricians who are experts at observing children's behavior!

I cite this because although I very much favor early identification of children with learning problems, I am not advocating that we put labels on them and thus limit what we expect of them. We must recognize a wide range of individual differences.

Last year the Task Panel Reports which were submitted to the President's Commission on Mental Health discussed this issue of early identification and intervention. And the Task Force made this statement:

> "The results of screening should be used only as a preliminary step for specific assessment, never for the purpose of categorizing, segregating, or labeling children. The use of screening tests and further assessment measures is premised on the realistic assumption that follow-up and remediation care can and will be provided. Otherwise, to screen is not only useless but potentially harmful."

School districts all over the country use a variety of screening instruments to (1) detect problems which might hinder the young child's ability to learn, and (2) to give remediation. This help must come early in the child's academic career, on his first contact with school, before difficulties interfere with the learning process and before patterns of failure and related behavior problems become established.

Now the experts haven't agreed yet on what is a good screening instrument for five-year-olds, so I don't want to suggest that there is one that is without flaw. Some people believe that the best instrument is a good kindergarten teacher with a checklist. What is most important is not how the screening is done or who does it or how many children are referred to professionals for further testing or for remediation. What matters most is that somebody in that district is concerned about finding the kindergarten children who need help and gets them meaningful help early.

After the kindergarten child has been screened, his teacher should look at the test results. If she believes that this child needs some help in this area or that in order to be ready for first grade tasks, then she finds a volunteer who can give this kind of help on a regular basis. This is what a child needs—a concerned kindergarten teacher who has observed him in class after she sees his screening results, a teacher who cares enough to provide some one-to-one help to improve language development or thinking skills or help him to interact with peers.

The kindergarten teacher is not putting a label on the child but is instead reaching out to find what sorts of help this child needs now in order to feel better about his chances for success, and to give him some of that success now in individual or small group activities.

So I would suggest that you look at whatever method your school district uses to screen kindergarten children and look at what is done with the results of this screening. Is follow-up help given, and in big enough doses to make a difference in the child's chances for success in school? Just as in medicine, it is more effective and less costly to diagnose and treat early than to wait until the patient is really ill and then apply a bandaid and give him an aspirin—or give him a

remedial reading course in high school before he drops out.

I believe in volunteers, and in the magic they bring to the life of a child. In my experience, there is no better place to utilize the services of school volunteers than in that kindergarten classroom.

Houston Kindergarten Screening

The purpose of early screening is to identify difficulties which may inhibit learning. The child who has faulty vision in one or both eyes and the child who can't hear well obviously need medical help early in their schooling—they can't learn if they can't see the work on the blackboard or hear the teacher's voice. Not so obvious are the needs of children whose eye-hand coordination, gross motor and language skills are not developed sufficiently so that they can succeed in kindergarten and primary tasks.

The Kindergarten Screening Project of the Houston Independent School District uses volunteers each September to conduct a gross screening of all incoming kindergarten children. Volunteers are trained to use five instruments in the areas of distant vision, hearing, eye-hand coordination, gross motor and language development. The screening is done in the child's own elementary school by a team of volunteers from that neighborhood.

Results of the gross screening are sent to the child's kindergarten teacher and to the principal of the school. The teacher observes the children whose screening results indicate that they might have a problem in one or more areas. If she thinks a child might need further testing or medical attention, she refers the child to the proper person.

The school nurse re-tests the children who may have a problem with distant vision or hearing. The speech therapist or educational diagnostician will see the children who may be slow in language development. The physical education teacher observes children who have potential problems in gross motor or eye-hand coordination.

> Many parents are not aware that their five-year-olds might have problems which could inhibit learning. A Houston kindergarten child who was fitted for glasses as a result of kindergarten screening program told her mother that she could see the leaves on trees for the first time.

The kindergarten teacher may also ask volunteers to provide follow-up activities for children who need to improve eye-hand coordination (such as cutting and pasting), motor skills (skipping, or bouncing and catching a ball), or in language development (offering opportunities to use language, such as playing with puppets or talking on a toy telephone).

Screening by volunteers is only the first part of Houston's testing efforts. The screening is unusual in that it is done by trained volunteers. To ensure that each kindergarten child is scored accurately and that scoring is consistent throughout the school district, these volunteers get careful training each year.

A volunteer screening chairperson is appointed by the principal of each elementary school; this person works with a faculty or staff member to conduct the screening for that school. A team of 14 to 16 screeners is recruited, including bilingual speakers where needed. The volunteers are notified of the time and place for the training sessions, held early in September so that screening can be completed by the end of the first month of school.

Each training session lasts three hours. Most volunteer screeners learn to conduct only one of the five aspects of screening, but a few are trained in two instruments so that they can serve as substitute screeners if needed.

The time required to test a child in each of the instruments is:

	Minutes			
Instrument	Slow	Average	Fast	Estimated number of children per half-day
Vision	5	4	3	30 (one station)
Hearing	5	4	3½	30 (one station)
Eye-Hand Coordination	10½	9	8	26 (two stations)
Language Learning	8	6½	5	30 (two stations)
Gross Motor	7	5	4	40 (two stations)

In September of 1978, 1,686 new volunteers were trained for the program and they, plus 1,014 volunteers trained in previous years, screened 11,945 five-year-olds in 171 elementary schools. Screeners were parents and grandparents, high school and college students, and employees of business and industry.

The Houston school volunteer program, Volunteers In Public Schools (VIPS), sends each kindergarten teacher a letter early each fall to suggest ways for making Kindergarten Screening Day go smoothly. In some schools, sixth grade students serve as guides to take the kindergarteners from one screening station to another. VIPS recommends that each school set up at least two stations for language screening, two for eye-hand coordination, two for gross motor, and one each for hearing and vision. Gross motor screening can be done out of doors, in the library, or in a vacant classroom.

Each kindergarten child carries his own folder from station to station. It contains his student ID card, a data sheet and a compilation sheet. Some teachers ask the children to help make or decorate their folders ahead of Screening Day. Sometimes the children tour the building to take a peek at the clinic, library and other rooms to be used the following day during screening.

How the screening program began

The Houston Kindergarten Screening Program was conceived by the Special Education Committee of the Houston Board of Education and was organized through VIPS in 1970. The original screening instruments and procedures were drawn up by a committee of specialists from the Houston Independent School District, the Baylor College of Medicine, Texas Research Institute for Mental Sciences, Child Development Clinic, and the University of Houston.

At that time screening instruments for five-year-olds were in the early stages of development. The Houston screening instrument has changed substantially since its development in 1970 and is revised as needed. Validity and reliability data are available from the Houston Independent School District. Fifty school districts around the country now use the Houston instrument; other districts use different instruments and some have developed their own screening techniques.

Language-Learning Instrument

Through the cooperation of the Houston Independent School District and its Volunteers In Public Schools Programs, NSVP can make available to members the entire kindergarten screening instrument used by volunteers in Houston. One section of that instrument, for language learning, is included here because language facility is so important in the overall development of children and affects so greatly their chances for success in school.

The language development part of the instrument was selected for inclusion because volunteers can provide help to stimulate children to talk. Research shows that language is the greatest developmental lag among children from low-income families, and that children who get language stimulation in the early years improve their intellectual functioning as well as language development.

The Language-Learning Instrument reproduced here is one of five used by the Houston Kindergarten Screening Program. The other four instruments test distant vision, hearing, eye-hand coordination, and gross motor development.

Instructions for language-learning screening

Purpose Language is the tool for learning. It is a measure of a child's ability to relate to his environment by taking in and by giving out orally thoughts or feelings. Language develops in a time-order sequence. Oral language precedes written language. Naming the concrete (nouns) and expressing events in time (verbs) precede the ability to express abstract attributes of thought and feeling.

Equipment

One primary chair for child
One primary table for child
One large chair for screener
Two #2 pencils
*Plural pictures (2 pp.)
*"-ing" pictures (2 pp.)
*Category pictures (6 pp.)
Scissors for screener
3" x 5" card
Book

*Sample pictures are located at the back of the Language-Learning Instrument

Screeners Two volunteers (including bilingual screener where needed).

Arrangement of Screening Area There should be a primary table and a primary chair for the child during screening. The screener should sit *across the table* from the child. The immediate environmental situation should be free from distractions.

The child should be alone with the screener, or with the screener and the adult recorder, if possible. *Do not* have a child waiting to be screened where he can see or hear the responses of the child ahead of him.

Procedure After child is seated, ask the child his name and establish rapport. Give directions in English first, then in

Spanish if needed. If the child requires some language other than English or Spanish, *do not screen the child.*

The items should be presented with enthusiasm. The screener should develop the ability to adjust to delayed response patterns in the young child.

Note: If the child refuses to take the entire Language-Learning Instrument, grid only NO RESPONSE *on the Data Sheet. If the child refuses only certain items of the Instrument, grid those* =0=.

1. CAN GIVE AGE, FULL NAME, BIRTH DATE AND ADDRESS

Say, "What is your name?" If he gives his first name only, say "What is the rest of your name?" Or, "What is your whole name?" (middle name not required)

Say, "How old are you?" (years only)

Say, "When is your birthday?" (day *and* month for credit)

Say, "Where do you live?" (number and street; if the child does not give street and number, say, "What street and number?")

Score on Data Sheet as illustrated below.

Responses:	None	1 of above	2 of above	3 of above	4 of above
Score:	=0=	=1=	=2=	=3=	=4=

2. BODY IDENTIFICATION

The screener will score the child on six body parts. The child *names* the body part as the screener touches her own eye, ear, thumb, elbow, knee, ankle.

Say, "Tell me what I am touching."

If the child does not respond, the screener may encourage by saying, "What is this?"

Screener touches her own eye.
Screener touches her own ear.
Screener touches her own thumb.
Screener touches her own elbow.
Screener touches her own knee.
Screener touches her own ankle.

Score on Data Sheet as illustrated below.

Body Parts:	None	1	2	3	4	5	6
Score:	=0=	=1=	=2=	=3=	=4=	=5=	=6=

3. COUNTS TO 30

Say, "Count for me." If the child hesitates, the screener should coach him by saying, "One, two, three; *now* you count." If there is some doubt as to the child's having counted to the best of his ability, say, "Now, let me hear you count again as far as you can go." If the child exceeds 35, interrupt him by saying, "Wow, are you a good counter!" (Score where the break is in the sequence of numbers.)

Score on Data Sheet as illustrated below.

Counts:	0-3	to 5	to 10	to 14	to 25	to 30
Score:	=0=	=1=	=2=	=3=	=4=	=5=

4. CAN REPEAT DIGITS

Present each digit in a monotone at the rate of two per second. Do not group numbers or let your voice fall at the end.

Say, "I am going to say some numbers, and I want you to say exactly what I say." (See the two groups of numbers below.) "Three, six." (Say these at the rate of two per second.) "Now you say it." If the child misses, change to the 2nd trial column and say, "Nine, two." If he misses, discontinue the item and score =0= on Data Sheet. If the child is correct in either repetition, proceed to three digits (1st trial column). If he is correct in either repetition, proceed to four digits, etc. If he misses both presentations of a given number of digits, discontinue screening and score the child according to number of digits correct.

1st trial	*2nd trial if needed*
36	92
641	352
8215	6239
65481	79531
413975	289631

Note: Scoring is confusing.

Score on Data Sheet as illustrated below:

Repeats:	0 or 1 digit	2 digits	3 digits	4 digits	5 digits	6 digits
Score:	=0=	=1=	=2=	=3=	=4=	=5=

5. PLURALS

Before screening the first child, cut plurals pictures along dotted lines so that screener can show them one at a time. Present *flat* on the table in proper order.

Say, 'Here is one pencil. Here are two _____." Child should respond with the appropriate plural form. Repeat procedure with the next five pictures (coat, dress, man, mouse, child).

Score on Data Sheet as illustrated below.

Plurals:	None	1	2	3	4	5	6
Score:	=0=	=1=	=2=	=3=	=4=	=5=	=6=

6. ING VERB FORMS

Before screening the first child, cut the pictures along the dotted lines so that the screener can show them one at a time. Present them *flat* on the table in proper order.

Say, "Finish what I want to say."

Present the pictures one at a time and say,

"This boy is _____."
"This girl is _____."
"This boy is _____."
"This boy is _____."
"This boy is _____."

Count one for each correct ING form; for example, on the first item, running, jumping, hopping is acceptable. If the child says the same word for more than two items, give

credit for only two. Example: If the child answers "jumping" for three pictures, give credit for only two.

Score on Data Sheet as illustrated below.

Plurals:	None	1	2	3	4	5
Score:	=0=	=1=	=2=	=3=	=4=	=5=

7. PREPOSITIONS

Place a book upright (standing up) and a 3" × 5" card in front of the child.

Say, "Put the card on the book."
Say, "Put the card behind the book."
Say, "Put the card in front of the book."
Say, "Put the card under the book."
Say, "Put the card in the book."

Score on Data Sheet as illustrated below.

Responses:	None	1	2	3	4	5
Score:	=0=	=1=	=2=	=3=	=4=	=5=

8. GIVES OPPOSITE ANALOGIES

Say, "I am going to say something, and you tell me what comes next.

Say, "An elephant is big. A cat is _____."

If the child does not say "little" or "small," repeat the sentence and complete it with emphasis on the word "little." This is a practice item and will not count in the scoring. Give the rest of the items without prompting.

Say, "Fire is hot. Ice is _____." (cold)
Say, "A block is square. A ball is _____." (round or circle)
Say, "A boy is short. A man is _____." (tall)
Say, "A rock is hard. A pillow _____." (soft)
Say, "A rabbit is fast. A turtle is _____." (slow)

Score on Data Sheet as illustrated below.

Correct:	None	1	2	3	4	5
Score:	=0=	=1=	=2=	=3=	=4=	=5=

9. CAN CATEGORIZE

Say, "I'm going to show you three pictures. You point to the *two* pictures that go together best."

Count one for each correct response verbalized, pointed to or both. Correct answers are:

a. dress - shoes
b. notebook - book
c. boy - girl
d. table - chair
e. apple - banana
f. truck - car

Score on Data Sheet as illustrated below.

Responses:	None	1	2	3	4	5	6
Score:	=0=	=1=	=2=	=3=	=4=	=5=	=6=

10. LANGUAGE USED

In the appropriate place on the Data Sheet, grid the language used in screening. If the child was screened in English only, grid English. If the child understood only Spanish, grid Spanish. If the child understood some English but required some Spanish, grid Both.

Score on Data Sheet as illustrated below

Score:	Language Used	English	Spanish	Both
		0	0	0

Adequate-Referred-No Response Overall performance in Language-Learning should be gridded as follows:

ADEQUATE if total score is 26 or above
REFERRED if total score is 25 or below
NO RESPONSE if child refuses to take the entire Language-Learning Instrument

Score on Data Sheet as illustrated below.

Score:	Adequate	Referred	No Response
	0	0	0

Compilation Sheet and Report Sheet After completing all information on the Data Sheet, complete the Language-Learning section of the Compilation Sheet. If the child is referred or did not respond, transfer his name to the Report Sheet, filled out in triplicate with carbon paper.

Identification Card Check the child's ID card upon completion of the Language-Learning Instrument.

Remember, if you are in doubt about a response, do not give credit. Do not give clues—you are not helping the child.

Spanish Supplement Instructions for Language-Learning Screening

1. CAN GIVE AGE, FULL NAME, BIRTH DATE AND ADDRESS

See English version for instructions and scoring.

a. Say, "¿Cómo te llamas?" (If child gives his first name only, say the name, and "¿Qué?" For example, "¿Maria qué . . . ?"
You can prompt him further by saying, "¿Cuál es el resto (o "lo demas") de tu nombre?"
b. "¿Cuántos años tienes?"
c. "¿Cuándo es tu cumpleaños?"
d. "¿Dónde vives?" If the child does not give street and number, say "¿La calle y el número?"

2. BODY IDENTIFICATION

See English version for instructions and scoring.

Say, "Dime que estóy tocando." If the child does not respond, the screener may encourage by saying, "¿Qué es ésto?"

Screener touches her own (ojo), (oido), (dedo gordo), (codo), (rodilla), (tobillo).

3. COUNTS TO 30
See English version for instructions and scoring. Say, "Cuenta, por favor." If the child hesitates, the screener should coach him by saying, "Uno, dos, tres, ahora tú cuenta." If there is some doubt as to the child's having counted to the best of his ability, say, "Ahora, déjame oirte contar otra vez hasta donde puedas." If the child exceeds 35, interrupt by saying, "¡Carramba, pero que bien cuentas!"

4. CAN REPEAT DIGITS
See English version for instructions and scoring. Say, "Voy a decir unos números y quiero que tú los repitas." (o) "Dilos como yo los digo. Tres, seis . . . ahora dilos tú." If he misses, say, "Nueve, dos." If he misses, discontinue the item and score ≠. If the child is correct, proceed to three digits and then four digits. Say, "Seis, cuatro, uno; tres, cinco, dos; ocho, dos, uno, cinco; seis, dos, tres, nueve; seis, cinco, cuatro, ocho, uno; siete, nueve, cinco, tres, uno; cuatro, uno, tres, nueve, siete, cinco; dos, ocho, nueve, seis, tres, uno."

5. PLURALS
See English version for instructions and scoring. Say, "Aquí está un lápiz. Aquí están dos _____ (lápices)." Repeat for abrigo (abrigos); vestido (vestidos); hombre (hombres); ratón (ratones); nino (ninõs).

6. ING VERB FORMS
See English version for instructions and scoring. Say, "Ahora quiero que me digas que está haciendo cada uno de estos niños. ¿Qué está haciendo este niño (o niña)?" Repeat for each picture. (Corriendo o caminando; brincando; escarbando; bateando; nadando).

7. PREPOSITIONS
See English version for instructions and scoring.

a. Say, "Pon la tarjeta arriba del libro."
Say, "Pon la tarjeta detras del libro."
Say, "Pon la tarjeta enfrente del libro."
Say, "Pon la tarjeta debajo del libro."
Say, "Pon la tarjeta dentro del libro."

8. GIVES OPPOSITE ANALOGIES
See English version for instructions and scoring. Say, "Voy a decir algo y tú me dices lo que sigue. Un elefante es grande. Un gato es _____." If the child does not say "chiquito" or "pequeño," tell him he should say "chiquito" and then repeat the whole sentence. Give the rest of the items without prompting.

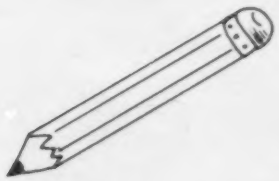
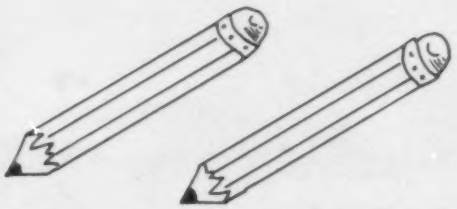
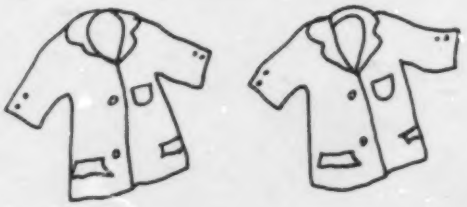
a. Say, "La lumbre (o el fuego) es caliente. El hielo es _____." (frio)
b. Say, "El bloque es cuadrado. La pelota es _____." (redonda)
c. Say, "Un hombre es alto. Un niño es _____." (corto o romito)
d. Say, "Una piedra es dura. Una almohada es _____." (suave o blandita)
e. Say, "El conejo es rápido. La tortuga es _____." (lenta o despaciosa)

9. CAN CATEGORIZE
See English version for instructions and scoring. Say, "Te voy a enseñar unos retratos. Enséñame las dos cosas que van juntas."

Correct answers:

a. vestido - zapatos
b. libro - libreta o cuaderno
c. niño - niña
d. silla - mesa
e. manzana - plátano
f. camión o autobus - coche o auto

Language—Item 5
Plurals

1 	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	

Language—Item 6
Ing Verb Forms

2

1

3

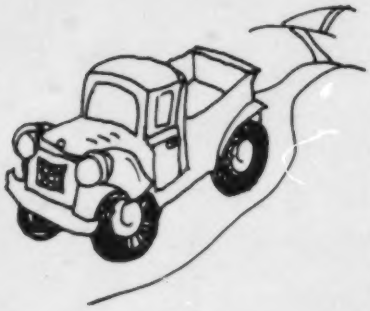
4

5

Language—Item 9
Can Categorize

(a)

(b)

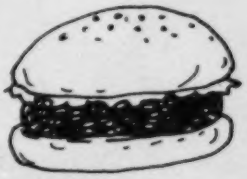


(c)

Language—Item 9
Can Categorize

(d)

(e)



(f)

Some Follow-Up Activities

The young child who speaks fluently holds the key to success in school. His facility with words demonstrates that he understands oral language and can use it to express his thoughts and feelings. Later, when he is asked to read and write, those tasks will not be beyond his grasp—they are merely an extension of his ability to use words.

Some children, however, come to kindergarten without much practice in talking. They may speak only in words, never in sentences. They need practice in conversation to become fluent—but there is not enough time in a classroom situation for all children to get this kind of experience.

Volunteers can work with children, individually and in small groups, to provide experiences which stimulate them to talk. Volunteers tell stories and read books, discuss picture books with children and help them to name objects. They explore the children's interests. Sometimes puppets or toy telephones are the tools which the reticent five-year-olds choose to begin to express themselves. Volunteers sometimes coax a child to talk by pretending to interview him about his favorite food or television program and by asking the names of his brothers and sisters. A tape recording of their own voices interests many children and stimulates them to talk.

Many materials in the kindergarten classroom can be used to encourage language development; the teacher will have many suggestions for how volunteers can help. In Prince George's County, Md., the volunteer program provides teachers with a list of materials which volunteers use to stimulate language development: alphabet sets, letter forms and alphabet wipe-off cards, multi-sensory letters; commercial language development kits; rhyming puzzles; flannel board components which require the child to classify objects, recognize colors, use safety rules, build a story; sequencing materials; and a variety of games, puzzles and cards.

The activities on the following pages are among those used by volunteers in Houston. They may suggest other activities to the teacher and volunteer.

Volunteer Activities to Help Children with Language Development

	Activity:	Volunteer Will:	Child Will:	Materials Needed:
1.	To distinguish between truth and fantasy	Say a few sentences such as these: We sleep at night. Cars can talk like people. Susan is wearing a blue dress today. We don't have any books in this room.	Tell whether the sentences are true or false	None
2.	To follow one-step directions	Place a box on the floor and ask the children to listen closely and follow the directions, such as: Walk around the box, Mary. Look under the box, Tom. Put the pencil in the box, Joe. Susan, jump over the box. Mary, look into the box.	Follow oral directions	Box Pencil Art paper Crayons
3.	Tell about an object using words that describe it.	Distribute cards which show *one* object, then ask, "Who has a picture of a hat?" Ask the child to use complete sentences to describe the hat.	The child who has the picture of the hat holds it up to show the other children Say: "This is a picture of a man's hat." "The hat is black."	Cards with a picture of one object on each
4.	Classify items by group (toys, cars, foods, for example)	Ask one child to name all the toys he or she can think of. When the first child stops, the next child continues, etc. Ask the children to name kinds of cars, fruits, animals, articles of clothing, etc.		None
5.	Place story events in sequential order orally or using simple pictures		Tell a story such as "Little Red Riding Hood" or relate a personal experience using sequence	Optional
6.	Call familiar objects by name	Teach the children the name of all objects in the classroom and encourage them to refer to the object by name instead of using "it" or "that"	Use the name of objects in conversation	Classroom objects
7.	Relate from oral stories what happened before, next, after, etc.	Display a picture and tell a story in a three-step sequence, then ask a child to tell what happened before and after the picture	Look at the picture and say what happened before the event pictured and what happened after	Picture of an event
8.	Point to pairs of pictures with opposite meanings and tell how they are alike or different	Show pairs of pictures, such as: ice cream and lemons man and baby	Tell how each pair of pictures is alike or different: (sweet and sour) (can eat both) (older and younger) (both are people)	Pairs of pictures
9.	Follow oral directions	Call out directions such as: Look up. Jump to your right. Touch your right knee with your left hand.	Follow oral directions correctly.	None
10.	Choose object or picture that is different	Show the children groups of pictures or objects that are similar but which contain at least one which is different—such as pictures of three dogs with collars and one dog without	Look at the set of pictures or objects and tell which one is different and how it is different	Pictures or objects, all but one of which belong together
11.	Point to the various parts of a square	Give each child a large square drawn on a big sheet of paper, then ask the children to: Point to the top of the square. Show me the bottom of the square. Put your hand on the left side of the square. Show me the lower part of your square.	Follow oral directions and point to the parts of the square	A large square drawn on a big sheet of paper, one square for each child

	Activity:	Volunteer Will:	Child Will:	Materials Needed:
12.	Place an eraser in relationship to an empty box as directed	Ask each child to follow your oral directions using two empty boxes and an eraser: Put the eraser next to the box. Put the eraser in the box. Put the eraser behind the box. Put the eraser on the box. Put the eraser under the box. Put the eraser between the two boxes.	Follow oral directions	Two empty boxes and an eraser
13.	Pick up objects by sizes	Display ten balls of various sizes. Discuss with the children which is the largest, smallest, etc., and compare two, asking which is smaller; compare three, asking which is the largest, etc. Make holes of various sizes in an empty box and ask child to put balls through the holes.	Tell which ball is smallest, largest, which one is smaller or larger than another, etc. Fit balls through holes in empty box	Ten balls of varying size, empty cardboard box
14.	Answer questions about number of objects shown	Ask the children to answer questions about the number of objects, such as: How many fingers are on each hand? How many eyes do you have? How many players are on a baseball team?	Tell how many objects	None (could use number cards)

Other activities to stimulate language development

Volunteers in Houston kindergarten classrooms also stimulate language development by reading good literature aloud. Kindergarten teachers encourage parents to read to their children and provide them with a list of the Caldecott award-winning books. (The Caldecott Medal is given each year to the artist of the most distinguished American picture book for children—your librarian can provide a list of Caldecott winners.)

One of Houston's most popular activities to stimulate language development is cooking in the classroom. Volunteers read a book such as Sendak's "Chicken Soup with Rice" before they cook chicken soup. Or they may read "Bread and Jam for Frances" before they make their own sandwiches. Volunteers help the children to use words to describe each process.

Foods prepared in Houston kindergarten classes include French toast, gingerbread boys and girls, caramel popcorn, cinnamon rolls, fresh orange juice and fresh lemonade, hard-boiled eggs and freezer ice cream.

The children enjoy cutting open a fresh pineapple to compare the taste of fresh, frozen and canned pineapple and the various forms of pineapple—slices, juice, chunks, crushed. They put the stem end of the fresh plant in dirt and watch it sprout.

The children taste various kinds of dry cereals and listen to the sounds as they pour milk on the cereals.

They puncture the shell of a coconut through its "eyes" and pour out the milk to taste. Then they break or saw the shell to taste the meat. To use the meat of the coconut in cooking, they heat the pierced unbroken coconut for 30 minutes in a 350° oven, then break the shell, pare off the brown skin, grate the coconut and use it.

Chapter Three:

The Listener Program

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EFFECTIVE LISTENING SKILLS, a handbook for volunteers, which serves as a resource for Listeners 38

THE VERY SPECIAL ME, a booklet given to youngsters who participate in the Growth Center (Listener Program) in Fort Worth, Texas 45

"An open relationship between a child and a Listener can not only be satisfying at the moment, but can also help a child avoid some problems in later life .... feelings which are not buried during childhood will not spring up later as an adult's emotional problems."

—from a speech by Dennis McDougle to the School Volunteer Program of Greater Miami

Rationale for the Listener Program

The Listener Program as presented in this chapter is adapted from programs of this type operated by school volunteers in communities in all parts of the United States, including Fort Worth, Texas (where it is called the Growth Center); Dade and Orange Counties in Florida; Boise, Idaho; and West Chester, Pa.

One of the earliest efforts to refine the concept of this program was made in Rochester, N.Y., 20 years ago. Officials in the public schools there and at the University of Rochester pioneered a Primary Mental Health Project (PMHP) whose goals were to:

- decrease the number of primary children who were unsuccessful in school, and
- relieve teachers who spent an undue proportion of their time working with a few maladapting children.

The Rochester project uses trained housewives as paid part-time paraprofessionals who work with children on a one-to-one basis each week. These citizens, whom Dr. Emory Cowen calls "diamonds in the rough," now work with primary and kindergarten children in 28 schools in the Rochester area—children who are hostile and aggressive, shy and withdrawn, or whose educational failure is traced to learning disabilities. About 12 percent of the primary enrollment in these schools is involved in the program.

The project has moved increasingly toward preventing problems caused by children who face one of four life crises: parental separation or divorce, death or serious illness in the family, imminent surgery, or the birth of a new sibling.

Dr. Cowen describes the Rochester Primary Mental Health Project, which is funded by the National Institute of Mental Health, in a speech which is reproduced here on pages 33-38.

PMHP's success has led to the adoption of similar programs in dozens of additional school districts. The project's underlying concept, research, and experiences are reflected in Listener Programs, which use trained adult *volunteers*, as contrasted with paid paraprofessionals in the PMHP, to work with children recommended for the program. The PMHP works only with kindergarten and primary children; Listener Programs have found that this support by warm, accepting adults is useful to children through junior high school.

Credits

NSVP is indebted to the Fort Worth Independent School District, to its School Volunteer Coordinator, Charlotte Sherrod, and to Dr. Reba Jones, Director of the Growth

Center, for their cooperation and permission to use the materials and forms developed in the Growth Center in NSVP's training materials.

Thanks are due, too, to the School Volunteer Program of Greater Miami and its coordinator and former NSVP president, Dr. Audrey Jackson; to Dr. Joyce Jones of the University of North Florida; and to Dr. Linda Dubaldi of the Florida School Volunteer Program for permission to use materials they have prepared and published for use in their programs. Much of the "Effective Listening Skills" handbook is from the "Handbook for Senior Adult School Volunteers" published by the Florida School Volunteer Program and prepared by a consortium of educators coordinated by Dr. Jones.

Questions and answers about the program

These questions and answers may be adapted to use in a flyer which will:

- inform parents about the program, or
- recruit potential Listeners.

1. What is a Listener Program?
A Listener Program is one which pairs a warm, accepting adult with a child on a one-to-one basis during school hours. The child-Listener friendship creates a situation in which the child can share conversation, experiences, joys, and anxieties. Having an adult friend who is not in a role of authority can be a healing and liberating experience. The Listener encourages the child to make decisions and to choose from alternatives in solving problems. The goal of the Listener is not only to be a friend but also to help improve the child's confidence and ability to achieve in the classroom, and perhaps to help develop new behaviors.

2. What children are selected for the Listener Program?
Children chosen to participate are those who can profit from extra attention from adults. They may have trouble adjusting in the classroom setting, or may have special learning problems which result in poor academic performance or disruptive behavior. A child may be so shy and withdrawn that learning is inhibited, or aggressive and unable to control impulses and emotions. A child may be coping with an immense problem such as the death of a family member, or divorce and separation of parents. Other children may have none of these problems, but may benefit from the close and continuing relationship with a caring adult.

3. How is a child recommended for the program?
A teacher, counselor, principal, or parent may recommend a child for the program. The Growth Center in Fort Worth, Texas, has developed a form which helps teachers to determine whether a child might benefit from the program. (See page 23.) Children are selected to participate on the basis of need, potential effectiveness of the program for the child, and availability of adult Listeners.

4. How are the child's parents involved in the program?
The program is school-based and limited to school hours, but parents must give permission for their child to participate. The parents receive a letter explaining the Listener Program and are asked to sign and return the parent permission form. (See page 27.) When parent permission is received, the child is assigned a Listener and a schedule is arranged.

5. Who are the Listeners?
Listeners are trained adult volunteers who relate well to children and enjoy working with them. Listeners are reliable and adaptable and can accept as well as give constructive criticism. Many Listeners are parents and grandparents who feel successful in their roles. Listeners bring to the program good coping skills and personal warmth. They are trained in effective listening skills and meet regularly with other Listeners and professional personnel to share experiences and to learn from each other.

6. How are Listeners recruited?
Listeners are recruited just as other school volunteers. In some communities, the local mental health association helps with recruiting, and in some communities a service club, such as Kiwanis or the Junior League, asks its members to become Listeners. Men are particularly valued as Listeners because many children lack adult male role models and friends.

7. Who provides the training for Listeners?
School psychologists and guidance counselors usually provide the training for Listeners, although others in the community—for example, those who train Hotline volunteers—may assume this role. Training for the Listeners is given each fall before they begin to meet with children, and continues on a regular basis throughout the school year, often in monthly meetings for all Listeners in the school or in the school district.

8. How much time does each Listener give to the program?
Listeners give at least one hour per week during school hours (preferably more), plus time for scheduled training and sharing sessions.

9. How many children are assigned to each Listener?
Listeners in most programs work with at least two children; some work with as many as six. The number of children depends on the need, the Listener's availability and interest, and the way the program is structured locally.

10. Where and when do the Listener and child meet?
The Listener comes to the child's classroom once or twice a

week at a prearranged time—never during the child's instruction in reading, math or language arts. They go to the library, the playground, or other quiet place where they can be together and not be interrupted. In Fort Worth, each participating school has a Growth Center area where the Listener and child may meet and where play materials are available.

11. What do the Listener and child do when they are together?
The child and the Listener decide how the 30- to 50-minute period will be used, depending on the child's needs and the special talents or interests of the volunteer. They may read a story or create a "play" situation and work through a problem. The child may paint a picture. They may work on school assignments, or just talk about why things happen and what can be done to make things better. Learning games are used sometimes, or games children enjoy such as checkers, chess, Bingo and tic-tac-toe. Some children choose to work with Play Doh or Silly Putty, play in a sand box or at a water table, work puzzles or dictate a story to the Listener. The Listener and child may share hobbies and interests or discuss their favorite television programs.

12. How does the Listener know what to do in the sessions with the child?
The Listener gets help during training on how to structure sessions in order to give the child opportunities to express feelings, try new ways of behaving, and learn to solve problems. The Listener helps the child to define problems, choose alternatives, think through consequences, and set goals. The Listener is sensitive to the child's needs and moods, and is flexible about what they do at a given time. The child participates in selecting activities.

13. What safeguards are built into the program to insure confidentiality?
The importance of confidentiality is emphasized during training. Listeners may be assigned to schools out of their own neighborhoods. Recruiters bear in mind the need for Listeners who are reliable, trustworthy, and sensitive to the needs of children.

14. Are Listener candidates interviewed and screened?
Yes. Not every willing adult can be a good Listener. Volunteers who wish to become Listeners apply through the coordinator of school volunteers or the director of the Listener Program. (Forms used by applicants and screeners in Fort Worth may be found on pages 24-26.)

15. How is a Listener Program set up?
If your Listener Program is to succeed, it needs the approval of your local board of education, the enthusiasm of individual principals, and the cooperation of teachers. It also needs a dedicated program coordinator.

16. Who coordinates the Listener Program?
Each school needs a Listener Program coordinator or director, a person who works with the school's guidance counselor or other assigned staff member to recruit and work with Listeners; explain the program to teachers, and help schedule times for Listeners to work with the children; arrange for Listener orientation, training, and sharing sessions; and coordinate program evaluation.

17. What is the role of the guidance counselor or school psychologist?
The counselor or psychologist works with the program director to make the program run smoothly. The counselor or psychologist secures parent permission and works with teachers to select children who will benefit most from the program. The counselor or psychologist usually conducts the training for the Listener Program or arranges for it.

18. How can a principal help to ensure the program's success?
The principal can do much to facilitate the Listener Program through continuing interest and support, providing materials, space, speakers for training, and other resources. The principal can encourage parents to permit children to participate in the program.

19. Is this a new program? Has it been tried elsewhere?
Variations of the program exist in many school districts around the country—in Fort Worth, Texas; in Dade and Orange Counties in Florida; in Boise, Idaho; and in West Chester, Pa., to name a few. Parents, children, teachers, administrators and Listeners are all enthusiastic about the program and its results.

20. Is there any research about the effectiveness of such programs?
Yes, research shows (1) that children with high risk of school failure can be identified in the first three years of school, and that if nothing is done for them, they are likely to follow a downward spiral than can lead to a number of unfortunate social and personal outcomes; and (2) that efforts such as Listener Programs result in clear-cut positive gains for the children—their academic development and self image improve along with how peers, parents and teachers view them.

ONE LISTENER'S EXPERIENCE

Mrs. Alt was paired as a Listener with Linda, a boisterous and aggressive eight-year-old who was one of the largest children in her third grade class.

Each Tuesday and Thursday morning when Mrs. Alt called for Linda, the child asked to go to the library. For several months each session began with Linda sitting on Mrs. Alt's lap as she read a story aloud. The stories Linda chose were always about little girls in large, loving families who enjoyed many adventures and activities together—a stark contrast to Linda's life as an only child in a single-parent home which had no books and few enriching experiences or outside contacts.

Linda's teacher told Mrs. Alt that for half an hour after Linda returned to the classroom, she seemed to become that happy little girl in the stories. Then she reclaimed her chosen role as the classmate her peers feared most.

During the two years that Mrs. Alt worked with Linda, she saw her self-concept improve enough so that she could take turns, respect the needs and wishes of other children, begin to fit in socially with classmates and turn her attention more to academic skills than competing with the teacher for the attention of the class.

Basal _____
Pre _____
Post _____
Follow Up _____

FORT WORTH CHILD BEHAVIOR RATING SCALE FOR TEACHERS

STUDENT'S NAME _____ DATE _____

Birthdate _____ Age _____ Grade _____ School _____

Teacher _____ Subject Taught _____

Number of months rater has known this student _____

Please answer *each item* on the scale for behaviors which you observed during the previous *ninety (90) days.*

Write the number which corresponds with the frequency of the observed behaviors in the box to the left of each item.

Never	Seldom	About Half of the Time	Most of the Time	Always
1	2	3	4	5

EXAMPLE: 1. ☑ Participates in Physical Education.

1. ☐ Stays on task even in the presence of distractions
2. ☐ Speaks up in a group
3. ☐ Talks with teacher during free time
4. ☐ Tries new things readily
5. ☐ Admits responsibility for behavior
6. ☐ Participates in scheduled classroom activities
7. ☐ Makes friends easily
8. ☐ Tells the truth to adults
9. ☐ Expresses pride or happiness with own accomplishments
10. ☐ Shows respect for property
11. ☐ Completes school assignments on time
12. ☐ Volunteers for school activities
13. ☐ Obeys a specific order from adults
14. ☐ Works independently when required
15. ☐ Takes leader role in group situations
16. ☐ Is quiet in the classroom
17. ☐ Follows verbal directions from teacher
18. ☐ Asks adults to assist him/her
19. ☐ Looks happy, smiling or cheerful
20. ☐ Pays attention in class
21. ☐ Accepts another person's offer of help
22. ☐ Controls temper
23. ☐ Readily competes with peers
24. ☐ Sticks to task until completed

Suggested time for Growth Center _____

What other Special Services is this child receiving? _____

What one specific behavior of this child do you see as problematic in your classroom? _____

_____

What behavior would you like to see instead? _____

_____

Additional Comments: _____

_____

DATE:

VOLUNTEER INFORMATION SHEET

THE GROWTH CENTER

Name _____ Marital Status _____

Address _____ Zip _____ Home Phone _____

Age: 16-20 ____ 21-35 ____ 35-45 ____ 45-over ____ No. of Children ____ Ages _____

Occupation _____ Employer _____

Education: _____

Activities, Organizations _____

Volunteer Experience _____

Special Skills, Hobbies _____

Age and sex of child you would feel most comfortable with _____

What do you hope to give and gain from this experience? _____

Time Available: (list specific times volunteer can work)

Monday a.m. _____ p.m. _____
Tues. a.m. _____ p.m. _____
Wed. a.m. _____ p.m. _____
Thurs. a.m. _____ p.m. _____
Friday a.m. _____ p.m. _____

GROWTH CENTER USE ONLY

SCHOOL:

ASSIGNMENT:

TIME:

DATE OF ASSIGNMENT:

- - - -

FORT WORTH INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

GROWTH CENTER PROJECT

Volunteer Screening Guide

NAME _____ DATE _____

To Screener:

Not at all	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	All the time
1	2	3	4	5

Please rate according to the above scale the degree to which you feel the volunteer:

1. ☐ interacts warmly
2. ☐ speaks spontaneously
3. ☐ exhibits enthusiasm about serving as a Growth Center Volunteer
4. ☐ exhibits a sense of humor
5. ☐ asks specific questions about the program
6. ☐ exhibits a confident demeanor

Comments: _____

_____

Overall, I feel this person's potential as a Growth Center Volunteer is:

1. ☐ Above average
2. ☐ Average
3. ☐ Below average

This person should _____ should not _____ be accepted as a Growth Center Volunteer.

Interviewed by: _____

Listener Program Evaluation Form

(adapted from a form used in the School Volunteer Program of Greater Miami)

Please read each statement and decide how you feel about it. Then circle the number which most nearly corresponds to your feelings about the Listener Program. We will welcome specific reasons for your ratings also.

Training Components	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
1. The pre-service training sessions are a valuable part of the Listener training program.	1	2	3	4	5
2. The monthly sharing sessions are a valuable part of the training program.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Orientation at the school building level is a valuable part of the training program.	1	2	3	4	5
School Environment					
4. Listeners are regarded by the faculty as contributing members of the school team.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Listeners are regarded by administrators as contributing members of the school team.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Facilities at the school are adequate for the needs of Listeners.	1	2	3	4	5
Role of the Listener					
7. Listeners helped to meet a definite need.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Listeners were able to establish sastisfactory relationships with students.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Listeners affected the behavior of students in a positive manner.	1	2	3	4	5

Please check one: I am a _____ Listener _____ Administrator
_____ Counselor _____ Other (please specify below)
_____ Teacher

(Suggested letter for principal to send to parents of a child recommended for the Listener Program)

(Date)

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Hollingsworth,

Your child, Kim, has been recommended for participation in our school's Listener Program, which is part of our volunteer program. The program has been approved by our school board and has existed here at Parker Elementary School for three years. You may have heard about it from a friend.

Each child in the program meets twice a week for 45 minutes with his or her own special friend, a warm, accepting adult volunteer who enjoys children and has been especially trained for this program. During the time the child is out of the classroom with the Listener (which is never during reading, language arts, or math class), the child helps to select their activities. They might decide to work on school assignments, read together, or play a game—or they may just talk about everyday happenings.

The goal of the program is to help improve the child's self-image and ability to achieve in school. Most of our children have found this program and their relationship with an adult Listener very rewarding.

If you agree that Kim may participate in the program, please return the parent permission form below as soon as possible. When I receive it I will call to tell you the name of the Listener who will be his special friend and the times each week that he will spend with the Listener. You and your child may choose to continue the program beyond this year or you may discontinue it at any time.

If you have any questions, please call me at school, 727-6646. I will be happy to discuss the program with you.

Sincerely,

Helen Collins
Principal

I give permission for my child, Kim, to participate in the school's Listener Program this year.

DATE: _____ PARENT'S SIGNATURE: _____

Orientation and training for Listeners

Goals of the Listener orientation and training program are to:

- make the volunteers aware of the helping skills they already possess;
- provide them with additional strategies which may enhance the development of a caring relationship.

Orientation should include an overview of the goals and objectives of the Listener Program and a description of school policies and procedures. Among them are these:

1. Listeners should always sign in and out of the school and indicate where they will be in the building. Show all Listeners where the sign-in book is located.
2. When a Listener is not able to meet with a child for a scheduled session, the Listener should call the school as early as possible and make sure that the child and his teacher receive that message.
3. When the Listener comes to the classroom for the child, she should ask the teacher where to return the child when the session ends.
4. The Listener and teacher should plan a time when they can talk briefly about the child. The teacher's comments may help the Listener to define goals for the child.
5. Listeners must be discreet. What a child tells the Listener is privileged information, to be shared with school personnel only to obtain a constructive result. The child's right to privacy extends past the school and into the larger community. The volunteer who discusses confidential matters with family, neighbors, or friends may unwittingly do a disservice to the child or his family.

A REMINDER—

Children in the Listener Program have parents whom they love and depend upon. Their teachers are very important people in their lives. Even though a child may get angry at a parent or teacher and need to express anger, it will eventually disappear and the child will again seek the security of those adults closest to him. When you respond to a child's needs, you must listen and hear, but it is important that you not join him in his anger. The child is not asking you to make value judgments about his friends, family or teachers—he requires only that you listen and try to understand.

Training should provide the Listener with:

- knowledge of how to build a strong caring relationship with a child;
- strategies and activities which can be used with children in the Listener Program;
- an understanding of the social and emotional needs of children;
- techniques which the Listener can use to help the child learn decision-making and coping skills;
- an overview of normal patterns of child growth and development;
- ways to help a child set realistic goals;
- continuing in-service sessions to improve skills and confidence;
- opportunities for the Listener to gain greater self-wareness.

How Listener training is given

The Fort Worth Growth Center offers three types of training for Listeners:

1. *Initial orientation and training session,* during which all new Listener volunteers receive basic information on how the program operates, school policies and procedures, and an overview of the program and its goals and objectives. The volunteer begins to meet with the selected child on a weekly basis after this initial session.

2. *Individual meetings* are scheduled by the Listener with the volunteer coordinator, the school psychologist or the child's teacher. The Listener discusses with them the child's progress, and they give suggestions to the Listener about strategies to use with the child. The objective of these individual meetings is to help meet the needs of both the child and the volunteer.

3. *Group meetings* are held periodically. These may be for all the Listeners in a specific school or all the Listeners in the school district. The purpose of group meetings is to share experiences and concerns, provide additional strategies to the volunteers, and give learning opportunities through speakers or activities.

Listener Program training materials

Transitions and Crises Today's children live in a world filled with change and transition. Years ago, children grew

up in the same neighborhood and the same home with the same parents and went to the same elementary school all their growing years. They even had the same teachers as their brothers and sisters, and were known to all in the community as members of their family.

Things are different for most children today. Some of the changes and transitions will be of crisis proportions, which may cause children to alter their behavior patterns as they try to cope. They may become quiet and withdrawn or aggressive and rebellious.

Among the common transitions for children are moving, divorce, separation, remarriage (or a new boyfriend or girl friend), death of a family member, and changing schools or teachers. Any one of these may cause a child to feel insecure, rebellious, or anxious.

A friend can be an anchor in a time of crisis. Children need acceptance. They may not want to talk about crises or transition experiences, but the Listener can be invaluable by helping the child to identify and recognize his feelings.

Basic Human Needs Each person is a unique and special individual, but we all share common needs—the need to belong, to have a place and a relationship which gives us an identity and security. We need physical and economic security. We need to love and be loved. We need a sense of personal worth, and we need to be able to make our experiences meaningful. Some psychologists believe that the lower level physical and economic needs must be satisfied before the person can seek a higher level need.

Differences in Communication Levels of Children Young children are straightforward and are generally willing to discuss their perceptions openly. Older children may be less open. The early school years are sometimes difficult for children as they are required for the first time to conform to group norms. The child may not have experience in postponing immediate gratification of desires. He may not accept the necessity of conforming to school rules and thus may frequently conflict with school authorities—the teacher, principal, or his peers.

Play is an excellent way to help the child facilitate expression. Puppets or talking on a toy telephone or "playing house" with a younger child can help him to communicate; role-playing and problem-solving are useful with older children.

(From the Growth Center, Fort Worth)

Understanding Children's Behaviors A child's behavior is often an experiment to discover what brings recognition, acceptance and achievement. We do the same things. We and the child need recognition, love and feelings of worth.

We may recall a time when we made sure that someone knew of an accomplishment—we actually sought to be complimented. Or we may remember when we felt particularly alone or depressed and sought reassurance from a friend or family member. Many children's behaviors are attempts to find identity. Children need reassurance often. Feelings of being loved, or not loved, give the child his identity, either positive (successful) or negative (failure). To enhance a child's successful identity, Listeners can demonstrate acceptance and love by showing interest, encouraging the child, and being non-judgmental.

We communicate love and approval with words and with tone of voice, body posture and other non-verbal cues. Most importantly, we communicate through our attitudes. A positive and encouraging attitude toward a child will help build a strong and positive relationship.

Activities which Relate to Academic Work A Listener and child may work on academic tasks at times. The Fort Worth Growth Center areas contain educational toys and games. Adults sometimes look upon toys and games as unrelated to learning and academic tasks, but many play activities relate to skills the child needs in his school work.

Activities which require a child to use his eyes carefully and develop concentration and memory for things he sees will help him *learn to read:*

> card games such as Old Maid or word rummy, Scan, Concentration or Memory, the hidden picture page in *Highlights Magazine*, matching games and various types of Lotto.

Materials and activities which help a child *learn to write* require him to use hands and eyes in a coordinated fashion:

> cutting, folding paper, playing with pick-up sticks, tinker toys, puzzles, Lego, dot-to-dot pictures, coloring books, molding clay.

Games and objects can help the child *learn arithmetic concepts and facts:*

> dice and card games, dominoes, Bingo, number lotto, calculators.

Toys and activities also help the child *develop social skills and language:*

> hand puppets, dolls and doll houses, pantomime and role-playing, board games.

(From the Growth Center, Forth Worth)

Additional learning activities are listed in Chapter IV.

Materials on the following pages may be used (and reproduced) to provide training for Listeners. They are adapted from materials in Fort Worth's Growth Center and from the Listener Program of the School Volunteer Program of Greater Miami.

Please credit NSVP and the originating program if you use these items.

Helpful Techniques and Activities for Listeners

1. Emphasize the positive aspects of the child's behavior by asking the child to recount the good things that have happened during the last day or week (a young child may remember only the events of the previous day). You might suggest activities the child might have enjoyed, such as playing with a pet or eating a favorite food.

2. Role-play to help the child gain insight into social or personal concerns. This helps the child to see the issue from another person's point of view and is usually a safe medium of expression which can help teach socially acceptable forms of behavior.

3. Make an informal contract with the child, one that he can be expected to fulfill, such as agreeing that he will say something nice to his teacher once each morning and once in the afternoon. You as the helper will be expected to remember what the contract is and "hold the child to it." This is a way of setting goals.

4. Share your concerns through a "Things I Think About" time. The volunteer should use this exercise to suggest that we all think about some things we have no easy answers for. The Listener might tell the child about a minor problem she has experienced and ask the child to suggest possible solutions. This technique is especially useful for older elementary and junior high students to give them practice in problem solving.

5. Ask the child to tell a story from a picture. The Listener may then pick up on any item she perceives in the child's story. This technique is non-judgmental and encourages the child to be creative and to share his views and opinions.

6. Use hand puppets to help the child express himself. The child can focus attention on the puppets and away from himself while he still explores relevant situations.

7. Play games such as checkers or dominoes. This helps the child to learn the rules of games, but, more importantly, how rules apply in social situations.

8. Let the child use blocks, clay, tinker toys, or other materials to develop his ingenuity, imagination, and creativity.

9. Use doll figures to help young children to express personal and interpersonal situations.

10. Present problem situations common to the child's background and experience, such as: a new child moves into your neighborhood. Do you wait for him to come to your house or do you go to his to get acquainted? What do you do if you find a small child in front of your house who seems lost and frightened?

(From the Growth Center, Fort Worth)

Examples of Goal-Setting—How the Listener May Help

When a Listener asks a teacher if a child is having trouble in the classroom, the teacher often mentions academic problems but may also add ". . . and he never finishes his work" or "he just seems to drift in class."

The Listener may be able to help the child to succeed in school by:

1. ***Setting limits:*** The Listener may help the child who tends to wander from one activity to another by gently but firmly requiring him to choose one or two activities.

2. ***Helping the child to make choices:*** The Listener offers selected activities and asks the child to choose one and give reasons for his choice.

3. ***Insisting that he finish what he starts:*** Some children need gentle but firm enforcement of the rule that one activity must be completed before another begins.

4. ***Structuring small steps to success:*** The Listener and the child can define goals which are most important for the child and decide on small but effective steps that can be taken to reach those goals.

5. ***Encouraging independence:*** The Listener's role is to support and encourage but not to solve the child's problems. When it seems appropriate, the Listener may explain how she handles her own problems. The Listener will encourage the child's step toward becoming independent, such as settling a misunderstanding with a friend without help from an adult.

6. ***Expressing feelings:*** The Listener listens and reflects feelings, encourages the child to talk but withholds value judgments, and helps the child to express and deal with feelings which can be channeled into activities which are socially appropriate.

(From the Growth Center, Fort Worth)

Suggestions for Working with the Child Who Is Shy and Withdrawn

Do not force or demand participation.

Offer the child a variety of toys or games. Pick out two or three high interest items and leave them so they are readily available. Encourage any interest the child shows in any of the items.

Try to match the child's mood without imitating it.

Engage in a task which seems to have potential interest and, if possible, one which requires the child's cooperation.

Ask the child to help with a task or game. Structure the situation so that the child can perform in an equal or superior way to you.

Give concrete, tangible rewards as well as liberal praise and encouragement to any progress the child makes.

Use role-play or puppets to act out situations where the child can try out slightly more assertive behaviors.

Use imaginary stories where the child can play the role of the hero or heroine and experience success.

Model appropriate behavior for the child. If you lose at a game, you might say, "Well, that was fun, anyway. Maybe I will win next time."

Role-play an actual situation where the child is experiencing difficulty, such as making friends.

Talk about or role-play how people meet and make friends.

Ask the child to draw a picture of a friend and write underneath (or tell you) what a friend is. Or ask the child to draw a picture of friends he'd like to have.

(From the Growth Center, Fort Worth)

Suggestions for Working with the Child Who Is Aggressive and Acts Out

(These suggestions are useful in working with all children, but may be particularly relevant to aggressive children.)

Enforce rules in a positive way—for example, say, "That

is something we do outside," or "Please use your inside voice."

Be firm and consistent when a child tests your limits.

Decrease inappropriate and unacceptable behavior by:

- ignoring (not reinforcing with attention),
- taking time out (say "When you are ready we can continue the game").

Use your own talents as resources for working with the child. If you play a musical instrument such as an autoharp or kazoo, you might share it with the child. Can you do simple magic or card tricks? Can you tell stories or illustrate the child's stories?

Do not encourage the child to act out his frustration, but tell him that expressing his feelings with words or through playing with toys, puppets or in role-playing can often be very helpful. Playing vigorously with clay or pounding nails into a board or bouncing a ball can also be a release for emotions.

Contract with the child for improved behavior. You might make a formal contract which is written and uses a checksheet or chart, or an informal contract which is a verbal agreement. The contract should deal with one or more specific behaviors and have a definite goal and method of evaluating performance. The contract should also contain a clear reward (and the consequence for failure to keep the contract).

(From the Growth Center, Fort Worth)

Ways to Help with Problem-Solving

One of the most constructive things a Listener can do with a child is to help him improve social problem-solving skills. The child's ability to solve interpersonal problems successfully depends on the child's understanding of three areas:

- Defining the problem—identify it, gather information, understand feelings, set goals;
- Generating alternatives—think of a variety of possible solutions to the problem;
- Considering consequences—anticipate the impact of one's acts on others and think through the possible results of the action on others and on himself.

Children need practice in problem-solving to improve their skills. The child who "acts out" can be encouraged to talk to himself, a kind of thinking out loud, or silently, which causes him to actively reflect. In this way, the Listener helps the child to stop and think before he acts.

The child needs experience in recognizing, labeling, and understanding his own feelings and those of others. Identifying the problem is very important. The child may describe a very involved interpersonal situation arising from the breaking of a pencil or toy belonging to another child. One of the most useful steps in solving the problem is to identify it correctly.

The Listener may talk with the child about her feelings as well as those of the child. Games and role-playing are helpful in developing the ability to talk about feelings. The Listener can help the child to understand that a problem is something that happens between people that gives someone an unhappy or upset feeling.

Children should be encouraged to explore possible alternatives without judging the quality of a solution until a number of alternatives are explored. Deferring judgment about a possible solution is difficult for many children.

Then children need to explore what might happen next. They need to understand that all solutions and behaviors have consequences. They should consider the consequences before they decide which solution to use.

Children should be encouraged to persist in problem-solving. If the first solution does not work, they should try another.

To summarize, a child who acquires skills in solving social problems must: (1) look for signs of "not so good" feelings; (2) know what the problem is; (3) decide on a goal; (4) think before acting; (5) think of the different things that *might* happen next after each of the best solutions; (6) try out a solution; (7) try another if the first doesn't work.

(From the Growth Center, Fort Worth)

How to Listen to Children

Communication consists of three parts. First you must get the child to talk to you or respond in some way. Then you must listen properly to what the child is telling you, and thirdly, you must make an appropriate response.

Some volunteers are concerned about being alone in a room with a child for a period of time. They worry that they may sit and stare at each other. How does the volunteer relate to this young person? How do you get a child to talk?

Remember that a child is as scared as you are, or more so, because you are grown up and have talked to lots of other people. The child is not sure what it will be like to meet with a stranger. It is up to you to put the child at ease. First, let the child know that you like children and enjoy being with them; in particular, you are happy to be working with him or her.

A child learns a lot from your voice and your smile. The child's response depends on the first impression you make. If the child seems shy and unresponsive, don't rush. Tell the child something about yourself or a hobby you enjoy. Children move at a slower pace than adults, so don't worry if there are quiet moments. You may want to say, "Sometimes it is hard to talk to people you don't know very well." If the child nods or says "Yeah" you can say you have this trouble, too.

You might try something non-verbal—a toy car to move back and forth, or a game or other icebreaker. Some children are talkative, but many are basically non-verbal and tell much about themselves by body movements and the way they share an activity.

Your real job as a Listener begins when the child starts to relate to you and talk. Be sure you hear what the child says. To listen with a "third ear" is to listen with your heart. Listen for feelings and for things the child can't express in words adults would use. Gestures and parts of sentences may be significant.

When you listen to a friend at a party or to a TV or radio program, you may listen with one ear while you do other things—or you may be waiting for a chance to talk. But as a Listener, you will listen more carefully.

When the child does begin to talk and you are listening attentively, how do you respond?

Don't give the child the idea that you will be able to solve any problem he brings to you immediately. Many children may set this sort of a trap to see whether you are "the big expert." They may ask, "Are you going to solve all my problems?" or "Are you like my teacher who answers all my questions?" Establish early that you will not have short, quick answers, that you need to think about these problems and that you want to encourage him or her to think, too. Don't feel pressured to answer a question such as, "What will I do about that guy who is so mean to me?" or "What should I do?" Try to respond in ways that will encourage the child to talk. Ask for more information. Discuss alternative solutions. In the process the child may find answers.

Always be honest in your response. Don't give the impression that everything will be all right. Don't say, "I'll fix it, so don't worry." Many problems are not easily solved; children do have things to worry about. And they know whether you are honest. Be an honest, open, warm, and patient seeker after understanding.

Adapted from a talk by Dr. Elizabeth Metcalf, clinical psychologist, Dade County, Fla.; available through SCHOOL VOLUNTEER PROGRAM OF GREATER MIAMI

Is Help Helpful?

To people in the service professions, helping becomes both the personal life style and a core activity that gives meaning and purpose to life. Such helpers are youth workers, teachers, counselors, consultants, therapists, lawyers, den mothers, board members, parents, and friends.

Helping is a central social process, but it is not always helpful. The person who receives the help may not see it as useful. The offering may not lead to greater satisfaction or better performance. Even less often does the helping process meet a more rigorous criterion: continued growth by the participants.

A person has varied motivations for offering help: to improve a subordinate's performance, reduce the helper's own guilt, obtain gratitude, make someone happy, or give meaning to his or her own life. The person may want to demonstrate superior skill or knowledge, induce indebtedness, control others, establish dependence, punish others, or simply meet a job description. These conscious, or partially conscious, motivations are so intermingled in any act of help that it is impossible for the helper or the recipient to sort them out.

The recipient may feel gratitude, resentment, or admiration—or feel helpless, dependent, or jealous of the helper who has the strength or resources to be in the helper role. The recipient may feel indebted, or pressured to conform to the perceived demands or beliefs of the helper.

In certain cases the receiver of help becomes more helpless and dependent, less able to make his own decisions or initiate his own actions, less self-sufficient, more apathetic and passive, less willing to take risks, more concerned about propriety and conformity, and less creative and venturesome. In some circumstances recipients of help become more creative, less dependent on helpers, more willing to risk decisions, more highly motivated to tackle tough problems, less concerned with conformity, and more effective at working independently or interdependently. Help may or may not lead to personal growth and organizational health.

Under certain conditions, both the giver and the receiver grow and develop. In general, people tend to grow when there is reciprocal dependence—interdependence, joint determination of goals, real communication in depth, and reciprocal trust. To the degree that these conditions are absent, people fail to grow. A program and an organization are effective only as the participants grow. The same condi-

tions that lead to organizational health lead to personal growth.

The following chart presents a theory of the helping relationship. It presents seven parallel sets of orientations. One set of conditions maximizes help and a parallel set minimizes help:

Orientations that help:	*Orientations that hinder:*
1. Reciprocal trust (confidence, warmth, acceptance)	1. Distrust (fear, punitiveness, defensiveness)
2. Cooperative learning (inquiry, exploration, quest)	2. Indoctrination (training, advice giving)
3. Mutual growth (becoming, actualizing, fulfilling)	3. Evaluating (fixing, correcting, providing a remedy)
4. Reciprocal openness (spontaneity, candor, honesty)	4. Maneuvering (strategizing, gamesmanship)
5. Shared problem solving (defining, producing alternatives, testing)	5. Conscious modeling (demonstrating, guiding)
6. Autonomy (freedom, interdependence, equality)	6. Coaching (molding, steering, controlling)
7. Experimentation (play, innovation, provisional try)	7. Fixed patterning

Adapted from a talk by Jack R. Gibb, consulting psychologist, Dade County, Fla. (from THE SCHOOL VOLUNTEER PROGRAM OF GREATER MIAMI, FLORIDA)

Rochester's Primary Mental Health Project

By Dr. Emory Cowen
University of Rochester

This talk given by Dr. Cowen in Fort Worth in March 1977 will give the reader the benefit of a 20-year effort in a program with goals similar to those of the Listener Program.

School mental health services have always been far fewer than needed. Necessarily, the limited services available have gone disproportionately to repair work with a small fraction of overtly, seriously maladapted children. Hence many youngsters who desperately need help in order to profit from the school experience fail to get it and thus do not develop as they should educationally or personally—to their detriment as well as to society's.

That broad-stroke view was reaffirmed in the recent report of a task force of the President's Commission on Mental Health.* The Task Force's most ominous finding was that roughly 30 percent of American children experience school adjustment problems—many of a debilitating nature. That conclusion was based on a composite of studies done in about 30 different communities. Individual surveys from among them suggest that generally bleak situation is even worse in some sectors of the urban megalopolis. The well-known Chicago-Woodlawn studies, for example, reported a 70 percent school maladjustment figure.

If we take seriously the view of the original Joint Commission that education, like coal, iron, and atomic energy, is a major natural resource, then the education failure data cited above reflect a major national tragedy.

The Primary Mental Health Project (PMHP), which has been in existence in Rochester, N.Y., for nearly two decades now, is at its core designed to deal with these shocking, wasteful problems of children's non-fulfillment in the schools. Its key aims are to detect school maladaptation or ineffective behavior as soon as possible and to introduce correctives to encourage children's optimal education and personal growth.

Thus the project has a basic preventive flavor, in contrast with past traditional, after-the-fact, patchwork approaches in school mental health. Strong emphasis is placed on primary graders, since this age level offers the best possibilities for constructively modifying ineffective behavior before maladaptive patterns become entrenched. Once educational failure sets in, the child is subject to many secondary negative consequences, as for example, shame, ridicule, anxiety, and a sence of inadequacy, which compound his troubles.

Our approach avoids ancient concepts of psychological imperialism—by which I mean the view that if you only look long enough and deep enough you will surely find significant "dynamic" roots for virtually any problem, ranging from a broken arm to syphilis. Tough experience, rather than innate wisdom, has led us to discard that view. We have seen all too many children with sound, solid, loving, caring family backgrounds, whose failure to master pivotal educational skills was a core factor in later development of serious psychological problems.

Today, we are much more sympathetic to the view that educational failings can generate psychological problems, just as psychological difficulties can thwart educational growth. But most important of all, there is an intrinsic interface between these two types of problems!

Certainly there can be little disagreement with the view that the child who, for whatever reason, fails to "cut it" educationally will be greatly disadvantaged in meeting critical later-life adaptation.

Our work, which started more than 19 years ago, was motivated initially less by the preceding kinds of "high

* Glidewell and Swallow Task Force of the Joint Commission on the Mental Health of Children Report, 1969.

falutin" abstractions and more by several very earthy clinical observations. The first was that when children were referred to school mental health professionals in sixth, seventh, and eighth grades (many with very serious adjustment problems by then), their prior, sometimes thick, cumulative dossiers often showed that problems had been there as far back as kindergarten or first grade.

Either helping resources were not available or people hoped that if they closed their eyes long enough the difficulties would disappear. In many cases, far from vanishing, the problems became more rooted, complex, and disturbing over time. A second equally perplexing observation, made by classroom teachers, was that upwards of 50 percent of their time was preempted by two, three, or four maladapting children in a class of 25 to 30, to the detriment of those youngsters, the educational experience of the other children, as well as to the teacher's well-being and sanity. Such feedback was very mindful of industrial accident-proneness data suggesting that 70 percent of all industrial accidents befell about 25 percent of the work force.

We devoted our first five years to answering two key questions:

1. Can we, economically and accurately, identify high risk children?

2. Does a preventive approach help?

These issues were carefully researched and led to two major conclusions:

- The child with high risk of school failure can be accurately identified in the first three school years, and if nothing is done for him, he is likely to follow a downward spiral that can end up with any one of a number of unfortunate social or personal outcomes. Many of these negative outcomes (e.g., delinquency, addiction, school drop-out, residential treatment, confinement to state hospital, or other profound types of emotional disorder) involve terrible unhappiness for their victims as well as major ultimate expenditures of public monies.

- There are clear-cut, positive effects of the secondary preventive program whether measured in terms of the child's personal or educational development, how teachers see him, how peers see him, how he sees himself, or how he functions.

This early set of demonstrations established what we think of, retrospectively, as our "hunting license."

Merely identifying vulnerable children, however, is not enough! The critical question is, "What can be done to avoid such disastrous outcomes?" Those familiar with the current situation in mental health, particularly in schools, are keenly aware of the widespread professional manpower shortages. There is *no* community with sufficient school mental health manpower to meet existing service demands, much less buried need.

That harsh reality forced us to re-think patterns of service-delivery if children's needs were to be adequately met. The compelling answer reached was that human attributes such as commitment, devotion, interest, and enthusiasm might be as important or more important than education or advanced degrees as qualities that could be helpful to children experiencing school adaptation problems.

This led us to select and train nonprofessionals—particularly a breed-of-cat with the Latin designation *"genus housewifus Americanus"*—for roles as child aides in the schools.

These women—child aides, as we call them—following training, have worked under the supervision of school mental health professionals to promote the educational and personal development of youngsters experiencing school adjustment difficulties. Carefully selected for their life experiences, interests, and helping reflexes, they have been highly effective in the eyes of children, school personnel, mental health workers and parents alike. Moreover, their effectiveness has been documented through research.

While we tended, initially, to justify this use of nonprofessionals on the basis of professional manpower shortages and fiscal austerity, we have since learned that child aides are in many instances better suited for child-helping than are some professionals, because of their naturalness, warmth, involvement, and belongingness in work with young school children, and because of the continuing challenge that the job offers them. One has the distinct impression that many are more animated and excited about their roles and less likely to "burn out" than some professionals who are involved in repetitive service activities that they see as routine, humdrum, and nonreinforcing.

The critical message that cuts through what I've just said is that *every* community in this country harbors, in many different guises and walks of life, large untapped pools of potential nonprofessional helping power. The challenge is to identify such "diamonds in the rough" and provide the training, supervision, and quality control that permits society—more specifically, the people with whom they will be working—to derive maximal benefit from great natural helping talent.

PMHP is now located in 28 schools in the Rochester City School District and five nearby county districts. These 28 schools range from classic urban settings to fairly affluent suburban areas on the Mah-Jongg/Canasta circuit. There are about 15,000 children in the 28 schools, of whom about two-thirds are primary graders. Some are exclusively primary schools (kindergarten through third or fourth grade) and the rest elementary (kindergarten through sixth grade) settings. The largest has nearly 1,000 kindergarten through third graders in it, while the smallest is a suburban "neighborhood" school with less than 100 youngsters. Schools are often paired for project purposes with each school served by portions of the time (one-fifth to one-half, depending on the system's resources) of a school psychologist and a school social worker, plus approximately five half-time aides.

We do *not* tamper with the reality of professional resources; rather, we pose the question, "Given a fixed amount of resources, what are the most promising and utilitarian uses to which they can be put?"

Current project procedures can be summarized as follows:

1. Techniques have been developed for rapid and accurate early identification of ineffective school functioning. These methods pool information from professional interviews with mothers of first grade children, psychological screening, classroom observation, and teachers' judgments of children's educational and behavioral status. PMHP's research staff has done much work in recent years to develop a battery of rapid, objective screening measures, based on classroom behaviors of everyday concern to the teacher. As a result, the project now has several screening measures that assess problem behaviors and one measure of children's resources and competencies.

2. Most program referrals occur when the teacher perceives ineffective functioning in a child. These difficulties range from hostile, aggressive, disruptive behaviors to shy, timid, withdrawn reactions, to more classic educational failings such as specific learning disabilities. Teachers bring these problems to the attention of mental health professionals, both by verbal report and via the screening measures described above.

3. The early detection and screening data are brought together at an initial assignment conference, typically including school mental health professionals, the classroom teacher, the prospective aide and other relevant school personnel. Depending on the specifics of the case, the latter might include the principal, reading teacher, school nurse, lunchroom monitor, etc. The assignment conference seeks to reach the clearest possible understanding of the child's situation and to set up appropriate intervention goals and strategies. Aides then begin to see referred children regularly. About 90 percent of those contacts are individual and the remaining 10 percent in small groups.

4. Participating schools each have a cadre of about five half-time child aides who serve as direct help agents with children who need additional educational or interpersonal assistance. Aides receive focused, time-limited training (about six weeks) to help them to serve effectively in this capacity. However, we are basically going with selection rather than training variables. Aides are supervised regularly by professionals and participate in consultation sessions. A variety of additional training options are provided for aides, including case conferences and discussions, specific enriching training exercises (e.g., for working with children, in crisis skill-training, for working with acting-out children). Depending on whether the aide works 15 or 20 hours a week, a "normal" caseload consists of about 10-14 children.

5. Lines of communication among teachers, mental health professionals, and child aides are kept open, and frequent exchange of information, feedback, and coordination of goals are all encouraged. The goal is for all children to function as effectively as they can as soon as possible—both educationally and interpersonally. Substitute teacher days are provided to free the classroom teacher to participate in planning and evaluation conferences for specific children. Over time, that mechanism helps to increase teachers' understanding and sensitivity about the complex relations between psychological factors and the child's ability to learn. Some teachers have been able to translate such learning to more effective classroom handling—an important step toward primary prevention.

6. Later in the year, two additional types of child-oriented conferences, beyond the assignment conference, are held: progress evaluation and termination conferences. Generally, those are attended by the same people who attended the assignment conference. The mid-year progress conference takes stock of what the child has done to date, assesses how well his/her initial problems are being resolved, and, where necessary, realigns goals and procedures. The end-of-year termination conference both assesses the child's progress in the program and formulates specific recommendations for the coming school year.

7. PMHP central staff and its three senior consultants provide regular consultation during the school year. Such consultation is designed to support professionals, provide continuous program enrichment, and consider particularly interesting, challenging individual cases.

8. The PMHP school mental health professional's role is very different from the one traditionally defined. Far less of his or her time is devoted to direct one-to-one service with children and far more goes into training, consultative and resource activities for school personnel and aides. This mode of delivery allows PMHP to get at many more problems early, when they are still manageable; to do something about them; and to prevent difficulties rather than counterpunching after it is too late. Many, many more children in need of help can be seen, thus geometrically augmenting the reach and clout of the educational and mental health enterprise. The approach, far from implying obsolescence for the professional, points to new, more socially utilitarian roles for him.

Recently we published a comprehensive three-year survey of the utilization of PMHP resources. During that period the project expanded from 11 to 17 schools and from 55 to 77 child aides. The project brought both individual and small-group helping services to more than 2100 youngsters, about 600 of whom were seen over multiple school years during that period. These youngsters were seen quite intensively by aides averaging about thirty 30- to 45-minute contacts each, per year. Thus the delivery system was able to generate more than 25,000 direct child service contacts per year. Figures for 18 reporting schools in 1975-6 indicate that 988 children were seen last year. Cost/benefit analysis shows that for roughly a 40 percent increment in service costs, the reach of the school mental health helping enterprise is expanded by about 1000 percent.

The children seen as a group experience a variety of school maladaptation problems—some quite serious. All need special help. Without PMHP, most would have to struggle along as best they could. The total number of primary graders who received special help during this period was about 12 percent of the primary grade enrollment of the participating schools. That represents a significant proportion of the population experiencing school maladaptation. Indeed, the 12 percent figure is mindful of another figure from the report of the Joint Commission Task Force already cited—their estimate that about 10 percent of all American school children were so seriously maladapted in school as to require immediate professional help.

To the extent that these youngsters are helped to right their course, to adapt more effectively to the school environment, and to profit from their educational exposure, as our research data suggest, an important step has been taken in the direction of making education the national resource that the Joint Commission envisioned it, ideally, to be.

If I have so far given the impression that PMHP is a complacent, know-it-all, "fat cat" kind of project, I've goofed. We are anything *but* that. Indeed, our most basic roots lie in hard-nosed empirical program evaluation, skepticism, self criticism, and an abiding commitment both to separate wheat from chaff and to solidify and improve program.

As a result both of refinements in our screening instruments and earlier research findings, we recently established that certain youngsters (kids with predominantly shy-anxious referral problems) had more favorable project outcomes than those with acting-out and learning problems. That discovery led to the development of additional models for aide-training interventions designed specifically for children with acting-out and learning problems. Today we are less content to go with *just* the warm, committed human relationship. That works better for some kids than others. More and more now, we try to take the particular nature of a child's presenting difficulties into account and to tailor interventions that best address those specific problems. The in-group slang phrase for this development is "different strokes for different folks!"

Another example illustrates both the evolutionary nature of the project and the close ties between its service and research components. Many research findings feed back into the project's service mainstream. Recently the research team began to examine relationships between certain family background circumstances or problems and how children adapt in school.

Several interesting findings have emerged from that body of work. For example, children who have experienced the life crises of parental separation or divorce, or death in the family, seem to have more serious school troubles than peers who have not had such crises. Moreover, characteristic patterns of school maladjustment are *specifically* associated with different family problems. Thus whereas children from separation/divorce families show heightened acting-out problems, those from families in which there has been a death show marked anxiety, guilt, withdrawal, and fearfulness.

As a result of such findings, PMHP has mounted a specific, highly preventively-oriented, crisis intervention program. Children who are experiencing any one of four current life crises (parental separation/divorce, death or life-threatening illness in the family, imminent surgery, or the birth of a new sibling) but who are *not* yet showing school symptoms or problems are offered a focused time-limited set of contacts with a child aide (12 sessions, six weeks). The initial clinical feedback from school personnel on this mini-project has been very enthusiastic. The program has expanded this year and is going great guns.

This year we have begun to explore several more fundamental extensions which, God will it and the crops don't fail, may prove to be the most important steps that the project has thus far taken. These are steps toward true primary prevention, i.e., building health and resources in children from the start, as opposed to the frustrating, more typical school mental health role of counter-punching feebly against already-rooted problems.

Basically, we are pursuing two pathways in the quest for this particular Holy Grail. One involves the analysis and, we hope, modification of the social environment of primary grade class environments. The other is to train children (not just problem children—*all* children) in a family of skills and competencies that mediate healthy psychological adjustment. These two developments are still in the "happening" stage and we thus have no definitive data to report. I cite them, as well as the earlier programs, to nail down my earlier assertion that PMHP is anything but a "stand pat" program. To the contrary, we are forever trying to build a *better* mousetrap.

After many years of tortoise-like progress, i.e., slowly putting together the essential building blocks of (a) program development, and (b) careful research evaluation, PMHP "won its spurs." By that I mean that the project became visible and respected as an innovative child-serving alternative in school mental health.

One by-product of that process was that our long-term funding "sugar daddy," the National Institute of Mental Health, began to make a thoroughly reasonable point. Paraphrased, it went something like this: "Look, fellows, you've got a great thing going for you there on the frozen stretches of the western New York tundra, but isn't it time that you opened your eyes to the fact that there is another place called 'the rest of the world?' "

From their perspective the issue was clear. Any fund-granting agency—certainly one at the cutting edge of future developments—realizes that much of the money it allocates is destined to go down the drain. That they accept as part of nature's way. Much more frustrating to them is the situation in which a highly successful project submits a great final report that does nothing more than turn yellow and gather dust in the National Archives. Repeatedly wounded by that problem, fund-granting agencies now place much greater emphasis on dissemination of information by demonstrably successful new service modalities, as one way to encourage constructive social changes.

Thus in 1972 PMHP began a systematic three-pronged program in national dissemination, designed to facilitate program implementations in school districts around the country.

Step One was to conduct a series of intensive, live-in national and regional workshops for pupil personnel "types" in positions of responsibility, in school districts around the country. Workshop participants have been exposed to—at times nearly drowned in—the PMHP lore.

Two other options are provided to districts that elect to start similar programs: follow-up site and consultation visits by PMHP staff members, and short-term intensive internships for program personnel from implementing districts in PMHP laboratory demonstration schools—core schools, as we'll call them.

We have conducted a half dozen regional and national workshops in the past four and one-half years. As a result, more than 25 school districts around the country have started kindred programs covering more than one hundred separate schools and many thousands of young children in need. In a visible way, then, PMHP has had measurable impact on how school mental health services are conceptualized and rendered.

It was way back then that the first seeds were planted for what has turned out to be a highly fruitful, mutually rewarding set of developments.

Aided and abetted by a clear vision, commitment, dedicated pursuit, and plain old "know how," the Fort Worth School District, shortly after our first workshop, spawned a first cousin to PMHP which you here in Fort Worth affectionately dubbed the Growth Center.

Since birth, the Growth Center has thrived. Moreover, there has been a particularly healthy process of intercommunication and exchange of information and personnel between our two programs. Perhaps the highest tribute to our mutual trust is that we even share copies of grant proposals with each other!

The Growth Center is the Growth Center, not PMHP. That is as it should be—indeed, *must* be! We have learned many things from the PMHP experience. One of the most important is that our way of doing things is not necessarily the right or the only way. Indeed, a project such as PMHP or the Growth Center cannot survive unless it takes fully into account the needs, resources, and preferred operating styles—most basically, the realities—of the host district. Ignoring those realities would doom the project before it ever started.

My most cherished metaphor is that of the "pond ecology." Just as flora and fauna around a pond can only flourish under certain environmental conditions and may, in an evolutionary way, take on qualities that are adaptive to that special environment, so must the flora and fauna (the ways of doing things) of the Growth Center reflect the basic ecology of the Fort Worth Independent School District pond. That is where the imaginativeness and uniqueness of the Growth Center project shows up best.

When people ask me, "What is the special message that the PMHP experience communicates?" I shy away from methods or technologies that are specific to our pond and respond in terms of four broad orienting emphases that are self-evident from our work:

1. School mental health programs will get the greatest mileage for the dollar and do the most good by focusing on young, modifiable kids before their problems become entrenched and fan out.
2. Systematic early detection and screening is needed to locate vulnerable school children as soon as possible.
3. Ways (involving the use of other than traditional professional services) must be found to bring immediate effective help to the many primary graders identified through mass screening who desperately need help to cope with school's demands, and
4. School mental health professionals' roles must be changed so as to support prompt geometric expansion of effective services to maladapting children.

Fort Worth's Growth Center not only has each of these four qualities—it adds some features of its own, particularly in terms of its imaginative solutions to the nonprofessional manpower problem, solutions that blend beautifully with this district's pond ecology.

The PMHP experience has certainly taught us that systematic early detection and dramatically expanded effective intervention are *musts* in dealing with the well-documented rampant problems of school maladjustment. These activi-

ties will surely be central to tomorrow's ways of rendering school mental health services. Much of our current effort is directed to dissemination of this type of model nationally. One key mechanism by which this is to happen is through the establishment of a national network of four Regional Training Centers, each resting on the base of its own viable program.

We are not just favorably impressed—we are excited by Fort Worth's Growth Center. Although that sense of admiration and respect can in part be conveyed by words, it is conveyed more compellingly in the decision that has been made to name the Fort Worth Growth Center as the nation's *first* Regional Training Center.

Not infrequently, people take things close to home for granted. As an outsider, I want to say that you have a genuinely innovative, ground-breaking program on your turf. With the interest, involvement and support of appropriate people it can not only bring effective services to many young area school children in need, but can in its own right become a high-impact national model for innovative school mental health services.

Effective Listening Skills— A Handbook for Listeners

The purpose of this handbook is to describe and give practice in some of the basic skills involved in developing relationships with children. Warm friendships with others, whether children or adults, family or acquaintances, are determined by the extent to which we are able to communicate mutual interest. This interest, or non-possessive caring, is reflected in the way we are able to listen to other people, to accept them for what they are without imposing our own values or solutions, to respond to feelings as well as words, and to "be ourselves" in the process.

The materials in this handbook focus on listening skills as a primary component in developing relationships with children. Skills such as problem-solving may require more in-depth training than can be provided here. Many people find, however, that problems are more easily solved when listening skills are used effectively and experiences are shared.

NSVP is indebted to Dr. Joyce Jones of the University of North Florida and the consortium of educators who prepared the booklet for older school volunteers from which this booklet is adapted.

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Active listening

At one time or another—and usually with some frequency—all of us feel overwhelmed by events and need someone to talk to, someone who will listen.

Listening is not a passive process, but most people must *learn* to listen actively. *Active listening* means "hearing" feelings (or emotions) expressed as well as the words spoken.

School volunteers need to develop skills in communicating with children. The active listening skills described here can form the basis for a warm relationship between the child and the volunteer in which the thoughts and feelings are shared and understood. By sharing the emotions we experience—fear, loneliness, anger, joy, sadness, relief, and anticipation—we learn to understand each other.

Do the following self-checking exercise BEFORE you continue to read this handbook and again AFTER you read it.

1. The most effective way to show a child that you care about him is to
   a) not allow him to express negative feelings
   b) tell him how he should feel about things
   c) listen to him
   d) encourage him to forget about problems he can do nothing about
2. When talking with a child, it is better to
   a) stand over him so he will "look up to you"
   b) get down to his eye level
   c) avoid looking him straight in the eye
   d) make sure he knows you're the boss
3. The best way to build a good relationship with a child is to act like
   a) a grandmother
   b) a boss
   c) a teacher
   d) a friend
4. When two people talk while facing away from each other, they probably
   a) don't like each other
   b) are not having a very personal conversation
   c) are good friends
   d) are having an argument
5. Effective listening skills mainly involve
   a) having good hearing
   b) always having good advice to offer
   c) responding to feelings as well as words
   d) telling about your own problem

Which response would be the most helpful to make in each of the situations below?

6. "Mrs. Jones, I don't think I'll ever be able to read."
   a) Of course you will, Janie. You just need to try harder.

b) Well, it doesn't really matter, honey. We love you anyway.
c) Why do you think that?
d) You sound pretty discouraged about this.

7. "Mrs. Jones, can a person die from chicken pox?"
a) No.
b) Don't be silly.
c) Do you have chicken pox?
d) Sounds like you're a little worried about somebody.

8. "Mrs. Jones, look at my math paper! I got an 'A'."
a) Hey, you must be pretty proud of yourself today!
b) That's very nice, Janie.
c) Well, don't let it go to your head!

9. "Mrs. Jones, I hate Billy! I hate, hate, hate him!"
a) You must never hate people, Janie.
b) Sounds like you're pretty upset about something.
c) What did he do?
d) Oh, you don't really feel that way, do you?

ANSWER KEY: q .6 p .9 p .ε
ɐ .8 ɔ .ς q .z
p .7 q .ᵬ ɔ .ı

Building good relationships

Good social relationships build within a child a strong sense of personal worth and self confidence. Children who have no confidence in themselves create barriers that make learning difficult. You should make the best of every opportunity to build in each child a strong sense of personal worth. Helping the child to create a better self-image may be as valuable as any skills you can teach, for this makes all the child's school work easier and more successful.

The school volunteer who builds a good relationship with a child is, in effect, setting an example from which the child can build good relationships with others. This is your first and most important step toward helping a child to help himself.

A good relationship can grow only in an environment of trust and acceptance. It will not be accomplished in one or two meetings. Many of the children with whom you will work have reason to distrust adults. It may be a while before they are able to accept a stranger's unselfish motivation.

Let the child know that he is important to you, that you enjoy being there. If you come one week but not the next, your students may feel that you didn't come because you really don't care about them. If for some reason you must leave the program, explain why you are not able to continue during your last session with the children. If your absence is going to be temporary, be sure the children know you are coming back.

As you get acquainted, direct friendly questions toward the child's interests. Meet the child on his level. Think of your own experiences at that age and share them with the child. Avoid questioning a child about his father or mother or their jobs. If the child tells you about home, accept what is said without comment.

When you have learned a child's interests, talk about them. Encourage the child to express his ideas.

By all means, *do not try to impose your own tastes, attitudes, or values* on the child. Each child will have some special qualities that you will admire. Perhaps you will learn from the children.

Learning to attend

How can you communicate to a child that you care for him and are interested in him as a person? One of the first skills we must learn is that of ATTENDING. Attending is part of listening. It communicates to a child: "I'm here with you. I want to be here. I'm ready to share your world."

The skills of attending are not difficult to learn—in fact we are probably all aware of their importance. Unfortunately, they are easy to forget or to ignore in the press of everyday living.

The basic ATTENDING skills are:

1. Be on the child's eye level.
2. Face the child squarely.
3. Maintain eye contact with the child.
4. Touch the child occasionally.
5. Assume a relaxed position yourself.
6. Tune in to the child's non-verbal messages.

Be on the child's eye level

Small children, especially, spend most of their day looking up at adults. Nothing impedes effective communication

more than the psychological distance that is created when a child is constantly craning his neck to see an adult's face. It gives an impression of adult power or authority over the child and makes him less apt to feel that he has a "friend" rather than a "boss."

The solution is simple: don't stand when you are trying to communicate with a child. Sit on a chair or kneel beside him. This simple act of adjusting yourself to accommodate

the child's eye level sends a warm message: "I want to be your friend, not your boss. I want to be *with* you."

Face the child squarely

The direction we face when we talk and listen to others communicates a great deal about our degree of interest in the conversation. Have you ever noticed two people sitting on a park bench or at a lunchroom counter, talking to each other but facing forward? It is safe to assume that they are not engaged in an intimate discussion. Likewise, people who are totally involved with each other invariably position themselves close together with continuous facial and eye contact.

When you want to communicate to a child that you are interested in him as a person, he will be more likely to receive your message if you face him squarely, leaning slightly forward.

Maintain eye contact with the child

We all feel more comfortable talking with people who return our eye contact; likewise, when we attempt to talk with someone who constantly stares past us, keeps his eyes glued to the floor, or shifts his gaze around the room, we feel uncomfortable, disconcerted, and are very likely to conclude: "This person is not interested in what I am saying!"

In school, children have limited opportunities to have eye contact focused on them as individuals. Even though a teacher may be attempting to help a particular child, her attention is frequently necessarily focused on the class as a whole. Therefore, eye contact is an especially effective non-verbal means of showing that your attention is focused on a child exclusively.

Touch the child when appropriate

Touching is probably the most significant and intimate means of non-verbal communication in our culture. A hug may communicate more caring and warmth than the statement: "I care about you." Similarly, a hand on the shoulder, a brief touch on the arm, or a stroke on the top of a child's head all say, "I like you." Touching is an especially effective means of communicating caring to a young child who is not himself particularly verbal and who has not learned how to respond comfortably to spoken expressions of caring.

(NOTE: Touching is not a suitable gesture in *all* cultures.)

Assume a relaxed position yourself

Children are adept at "reading" non-verbal messages and are especially quick to pick up double messages. For example, if we smile at a young child yet cross our arms, tap our feet or stare, we are sending conflicting "messages" or "cues" to the child, and he will doubt the usual meaning of a smile. When focusing on a child, we can be most helpful if we are open and relaxed ourselves. This communicates to the child the message, "I'm content right now. I can listen to your concerns."

Tune in to the child's non-verbal messages

Young children are often not able to tell us in words how they feel or what they are thinking. But if we become accustomed to looking for unspoken expressions or actions, we will soon be able to "tune in" to a child and respond appropriately. These are a few of the unspoken signals a child may use to tell how he is feeling:

laughing
smiling
frowning
raising eyebrows
hands over ears
head on desk
gazing out window
stamping foot
tapping fingers on desk
curling up in a ball
rolling eyes
staring at floor
twiddling thumbs
folding arms
looking away
hunching back
swinging foot
yawning
screaming
crying

Building good listening skills

Most of us like to think we *are* good listeners. We probably have received advice from our parents and teachers as we were growing up to "be a good listener," and many of us have, in turn, passed this same advice on to our children or grandchildren.

We know people who seem to be good listeners. We may be able to identify what makes them so, or we may only know that we are refreshed after sharing our feelings with them.

Similarly, we can all probably identify people whom we feel are *not* good listeners. Again, maybe it is hard to say what exactly they do or don't do, but somehow we leave them with uncomfortable feelings and wish we hadn't shared our concerns, because *somehow* we got the feeling they didn't really understand. Perhaps they heard our *words* but they weren't able to listen for our *feelings*.

Building solid relationships with children, or with anyone else, depends greatly on the ability to be an effective listener. Fortunately, there is nothing magical or mystical about listening. We can all become effective listeners by learning and practicing some specific skills.

Look at some ways that people usually respond when a child shares a feeling. Imagine what your responses would be.

"I hate arithmetic! It's dumb!"

"I'm so fat and everybody hates me!"

"You're mean! Go away!"

"All the other girls are going to Janie's party, but she didn't invite me."

"My big sister really thinks she's something, just because she gets all A's."

Most of us, when confronted with such statements, want to be helpful. But most of the time, our responses do not reflect good listening skills and therefore are not truly helpful in the long run. These are some typical responses, however well-meaning, to the statement: "I'm so fat, everybody hates me!"

"I don't think you're fat. You're just pleasantly plump."

"Why don't you try cutting out desserts? Then you might be able to lose weight."

"Oh come on, you know you've got lots of friends."

"Well, why don't you help me wash the blackboards and just forget about it? Tomorrow you'll feel better."

Responses like these (and others) may hurt rather than help the child. In one way or another, they fail to respond to the child's feelings or unhappiness or rejection. Instead, they only serve to:

- lecture or moralize;
- distract the child from his feelings;
- argue with the child;
- threaten the child;
- call the child names or put him down.

Such hurtful responses create even more problems for the child. The effects of such remarks are to make the child feel defensive, inadequate and inferior, resentful or angry, guilty, frustrated, or that his feelings aren't justified or accepted.

You may ask yourself what you *can* say or do to be an effective listener. How can you show a child that you want to listen, you want to help him work out problems? How can you communicate that you care about him?

Some techniques

The first basic listening skill is very simple but often difficult to accomplish, especially at first. It is simple: SILENCE. In other words, don't say anything! Use the attending skills you have already learned to communicate to the child that you are ready and willing to hear him: posture, eye contact, perhaps a soft touch—but no words at all! You will be surprised how many children will quickly pick up your non-verbal "cues" and will tell you more—sometimes a lot more!

You may need to bite your tongue at first—or perhaps, in your mind, at least, clamp a hand over your mouth to keep from offering advice or soothing the child, but it will become increasingly easy to do as you find how willing some children are to talk when you really give them a chance!

Encouragers

Of course, we can't remain completely silent for long periods of time, primarily because the child will need more than our silence and attending behaviors to assure him of our continued interest. Another basic listening skill involves minimum response: a small "encourager" to the child to continue, to reassure him that you are "with him." ENCOURAGERS are expressions such as "I see," "Really?" or "Wow!"—sometimes accompanied by a nod of the head or other non-verbal signal that shows you are listening.

Door-openers

Another helpful listening skill, which involves a more active role on your part, is called a "door-opener," an "invitation to talk," or sometimes an "open-ended question." This skill is primarily used at the beginning of a conversation and includes phrases such as:

"Do you want to tell me about it?"
"Would you like to tell me what happened?"
"I'd like to listen if you feel like talking about it."

Door-openers are truly invitations for the child to share his feelings or concerns. They let him know that you want to help, that you are willing to take time for him, and that you are interested in him. Sometimes an open-ended question, followed by silence on your part except for a few encouragers, is all a child needs to work through his problem. And although the problem itself may not always get solved, the child usually feels better and is more able to cope with it, simply because he has been able to share his feelings with someone who cares and who is able to listen.

Avoid "why" questions. A "why" puts the child on the defensive.

Responding to feelings

Although the listening skills described so far are important for an effective listener, and will probably all be used in a helping conversation with a child, they do have limitations. They show the child that you care about him, that you are willing to let him talk without imposing your solutions to his problems, and that you want to help him. But they are restricted because they cannot demonstrate to the child that you understand what he is trying to say.

Active listening is a combination of specific skills, and these skills are at the core of any helping relationship. One of the most important elements in active listening is called RESPONDING TO FEELINGS. This is how you let the child know that you are hearing his emotions as well as his words.

Some examples:

Child: I'm so fat. Everybody hates me.
Volunteer: Sounds like you're feeling pretty left out of things right now.

Child: I hate arithmetic! It's dumb.
Volunteer: That arithmetic's *really got you down*, huh?

Child: You're mean! Go away!
Volunteer: Sounds like you're really *angry* with me right now.

Child: All the other girls are going to Janie's party, but she didn't invite me.
Volunteer: It's no fun being left out.

Child: My big sister really thinks she's something, just because she gets all A's.
Volunteer: Sometimes it gets discouraging trying to compete with her.

These responses have several characteristics in common:

- They focus on the feeling behind the child's words.
- They don't attempt to evaluate the child's statement of his feelings.
- They communicate to the child, "I understand your feelings."

The child's response to your recognition of the emotion he is feeling is usually an animated "Yes" and the child feels encouraged to continue. Even if you are wrong about the exact nature of the emotion (calling it anger instead of frustration, for instance), the child will know you were listening and will eagerly correct you: "No, I'm not angry, I just get so tired of trying..." So don't worry about being "right."

You won't always be exactly on the mark. But none of us consistently and accurately perceives the feelings of another person. Small children, in particular, are not usually able to send very clear messages concerning their feelings, and in fact they often are not quite sure themselves exactly what emotions they are experiencing. But one of the benefits of responding to feelings is that it conveys to the child that you are trying to understand his feelings, and when you are off target the relationship is not impaired. The child will feel comfortable about restating his feelings, and you can try again.

Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing is another skill which will be useful in showing the child you are trying to understand his message. In paraphrasing, you listen for the basic message and restate it in fewer but similar words.

Child: I hate recess! The other kids laugh because I can't hit the ball. I don't want to go out to play.

Paraphrase: You don't want to go out because the children make fun of you.

Clarifying

You can also paraphrase when you try to clarify the child's message. This is different from responding to feelings; here you are only restating what the child said but in a different form. Sometimes this is needed to sort out a confused statement with many elements. When you are trying to clarify the child's message, you might admit your own confusion and ask the student for help.

Child: I'll never be able to learn all this. I'm just too dumb.

Clarification: I'm not sure how you feel. Earlier you said you didn't have enough time to finish the assignment. Can you tell me more?

Perception checking

The purpose of checking what you think you hear is to clear up quickly any confusion you might have in understanding the child's message. To do this you simply paraphrase what you think you heard and ask the child if you are correct.

Child: I'll never be able to learn all this. I'm just too dumb.

Perception Check: The material seems too hard for you, is that it?

Mirroring

Similar to paraphrasing, mirroring allows you to repeat the child's words. It gives the child a chance to pick up on it himself, and encourages him to go on. He knows you are right there with him and listening.

Child: This is the dumbest place. I wish . . . (pause)

Mirroring: You wish . . . ?

"I" messages

Sometimes the child will upset you. That's a time when "I" messages will help you to sort out your feelings and let the child know about them. You are still being open and truthful, and you are not threatening him, but you are telling him how you feel about the situation. The basic form of an "I" message is: "I feel _____ when you _____ because _____."

I feel *disturbed* when you *shout at me* because *I want to help you.*

I feel *sad* when you *won't talk* because *I enjoy hearing about you.*

"I" messages give the child an opportunity to try again—without threats and without losing face. You'll get your message across and won't lose ground in working out the relationship and developing better communications.

"I" messages are also appropriate when your feel good about what the child has done: I feel *happy* when you *say you like to come to the Growth Center* because *I like to spend time with you, too.*

Remember to:

- Listen intently, not only to the child's words, but

also for his feelings. Watch carefully for non-verbal signals (tears, furrowed brow, slumped posture, fidgeting, etc.)

- Identify, in your mind, the main *feelings* the child is expressing. Sometimes the child will verbally state a feeling: "I'm lonely here. I want to go home." But more often, particularly with a younger child, he won't actually name his feelings but may say, "Do you think my mom is going to be mad when she sees my torn shirt?"
- Reflect the feeling back to the child in a brief statement or question: "You're a little *scared* of how your mother will act when she sees your shirt." "Sounds like you're feeling kind of left out of things today."

Active listening—and responding to feelings in particular—may seem difficult at first. But the more you become familiar with the skills, the easier it will be for you. Practice. Practice with everyone you know. These are good communications skills for all situations, and you will be surprised at what a good listener you have become.

An example

The following imaginary but realistic conversation employs various listening skills:

Child: Mrs. Jones, I don't want to stay here today. Can I go home?

Volunteer: You *do* sound unhappy, Johnny. (responding to feelings)

Child: I just hate those kids in the fifth grade, that's all.

Volunteer: Oh? (encourager)

Child: Yeah, they think they are really big shots and I hate them.

Volunteer: Hmm. (encourager)

Child: Tommy Brown is the worst one. He really thinks he's hot stuff, just because he has a new baseball glove.

Volunteer: He has a new glove. (mirroring or silence)

Child: (after pause) They always make fun of me because I have to play with my dad's old glove.

Volunteer: Oh? (encourager)

Child: Yeah. Dad said he would get the new glove but I have to pay for half of it. And I only have 92 cents.

Volunteer: It's pretty discouraging when you can't see how you're going to get the glove. (responding to feelings)

Child: Yeah, it sure is! I've been trying to save my allowance but it's hard to do. I'll bet Tommy Brown didn't have to buy half of his glove.

Volunteer: You think it's just not fair for you to have to spend your money on a glove when the other kids don't. (responding to feelings)

Child: Well, I guess it's a fair way to do it. But I just can't save money, that's all.

Volunteer: Oh. You think it's an OK idea, if you could only stick to it. (paraphrase)

Child: Yeah, that's right. How can I save $4.00 more when my allowance is only 50¢ a week?

Volunteer: Wow! You would have to save all your allowance for two whole months. (paraphrase) That's pretty frustrating, huh! (responding to feelings)

Child: Yeah—what I need is money quicker. Maybe my dad would give me my allowance early.

Volunteer: You think that might be the answer, huh? (perception checking)

Child: Yeah—no. Then I'd have no allowance for anything else for a *long time*!

Volunteer: Hmm. (encourager)

Child: Yeah! I'll bet my mom would let me help her pull weeds from her tomato garden. And I could clean up Mr. Smith's dog run. He's already asked me about that!

Volunteer: Wow! Sounds like you're pretty excited about all these new ideas you've come up with. (responding to feelings)

Child: Yeah. Gosh, thanks, Mrs. Jones. You've really helped me out.

Volunteer: I'm glad I was here to help, Johnny—I want to see that new glove when you get it, OK?

Child: Sure! Thanks. So long.

Responding to feelings

Although active listening skills are most effective when a child has a problem, they are extremely important skills for building relationships when there is no problem. When the child is proud of an accomplishment, excited about a coming event, or in a happy state of mind, we may normally fail to capture the essence of a child's happy emotions that he is trying to share. Instead, we unintentionally damper his enthusiasm. For example, a child might run up to us with the announcement that he has just learned to tie his own shoelaces. Far too often we fail to respond to his feeling of pride and reply perfunctorily, "That's nice, Jimmy."

Of course, occasional off-hand comments are not going to do permanent harm. But consistent misreadings of a child's feelings, positive or negative, eat away at his developing self-confidence and erode his good feelings about you as a confidante.

The way to respond effectively to a child is to key in on his feelings. Look at these two examples of ineffective and effective active litening responses to a child's *positive feelings*:

Child:	Look at my picture, Mrs. Jones! I drew my house and my dog, all by myself.
Poor response:	Which is the house and which is the dog?
Better response:	That's really a nice picture, Joe.
Active listening response:	Wow! I can see that you are really *proud* of that drawing, Joe!
Child:	Guess what, Mrs. Jones! I'm going to the zoo tomorrow!
Poor response:	That's nice, dear.
Better response:	Wonderful! I hope you have a really fun day!
Active listening response:	Hey, you are really *excited* about that, aren't you?

In summary

The benefits of active listening include:

- *showing the child that you are interested in him as a person;*
- proving to the child that you have not only heard him; you have also *understood*;
- checking your perception of the child's message;
- giving the child a chance to ventilate his feelings;
- communicating acceptance of the child;
- helping the child do his own problem-solving; it keeps the responsibility with him, yet you remain involved;
- fostering the child as he moves from a superficial to a deeper, more basic feeling or concern;
- helping the child become more aware of his feelings and the feelings of others.

Being yourself positively

In developing healthy and happy relationships with children, we should model behaviors that we wish to encourage in children, as well as learn and use good listening skills. Some of the important behaviors that we should model are: self-disclosure or sharing, and a positive approach.

Self-disclosure or sharing simply means that you act "real" to the child rather than always trying to act out a part. It means you are willing to share your experiences and feelings with the child rather than remaining passive and aloof, never allowing him to see "the real you." Unfortunately, this is hard for some of us to do because it involves a certain amount of risk-taking. It is easier to remain aloof than to express your feelings or opinions, particularly when you think others might see you in a negative light if you share your "real self." But that doesn't usually happen. Think of people you know who are open and willing to share their feelings and experiences with you. Don't you feel closer to those people than to people who never let you know how they feel or think about anything? It is true that we are drawn closer to people who are willing to share their humanness with us, imperfections and all. Likewise, children respond more positively and develop closer relationships with adults who can be real, who can say, "I was wrong," or "I get scared sometimes, too," or "I don't know all the answers," or "I'm sorry." And how much more relaxing and rewarding are our relationships with people when we know we are free to be ourselves!

Of course, "being ourselves" does not necessarily mean displaying all our negative thoughts, pet peeves, physical discomforts, and general complaints! Although we are closer to those friends and relatives whom we see as "real" rather than "phony," or "humble" rather than "defensive," we also know that it is no fun to be around people who are constantly irritable, who seldom smile, and who seem to complain a lot. For one thing, such behaviors are contagious—if we are around a person very long who is always griping, we find that we start griping, too! Thus we get locked into an unsatisfactory relationship with that person, and we end up not feeling very happy with ourselves, either!

The solution, then, is to be yourself, to share your feelings and thoughts, but accentuate the positive! You will not only find yourself building solid, warm, and lasting friendships with children—you will also be providing the child with a model that he can carry with him as he grows and develops important relationships with other people throughout his life!

This booklet, THE VERY SPECIAL ME I'M GLAD TO BE BOOK, is given to each child who participates in the Fort Worth Growth Center. It has proven to be an effective ice-breaker in early sessions between the child and the Listener.

Together they paste a picture of the child on the cover, and together they fill in the blanks. They explore the child's likes and dislikes and find things that make the child feel better about himself or herself. They discuss feelings and the child learns that it is all right to express feelings, even feelings such as anger and hurt, when they are together. The booklet has helped many Fort Worth children to feel better about themselves and to learn to trust their adult "special friends."

The Very Special Me
I'm Glad to Be
Book

Name _____
Special Friend _____
Date _____
School _____

This is a very special book because it is about someone who is very special — ME !
My name is _____.
You can call me _____.
But, please don't call me _____.
I'm a very special person because nobody else looks, thinks, or acts just like me.

1

I like being me because _____.
When I'm by myself, I like to _____.
When I'm not by myself, I like to be with _____.
Today is _____.
My birthday is _____.

2

I'm ____ years ____ months ____ days old.
I'm ____ inches tall.
My hair is the same color as _____.
I kind of look like this:

3

Here are some very special things about me.
My eyes are the same color as _____.
I have very special eyes to see very special things.
My favorite color is _____.
My favorite T.V. Show is _____.
One of the neatest things I ever saw was _____.

4

I think that beautiful is _____.
I think that ugly is _____.
My favorite game is _____.
My favorite time of day is _____ because I get to _____.
The thing I do best is _____.

5

The thing I don't do well is _____.
When I grow up, I want to be _____.
I want to learn how to _____.
I have a very special brain that has very special thoughts. I like to think about _____.

6

A good thing to do on a rainy day is _____.
I also have lots of memories. I like to remember the time when I _____.
My mind can also make special wishes. A wish is something that you don't always say out loud

7

because it might not come true. I wish sometimes that _____.

If I could have three wishes, I would wish

① _____.

② _____.

③ _____.

I have a special nose on my face that is good for breathing and smelling.

8

I like the smell of _____,

but I don't like the smell of _____.

Under my nose, I have a very special mouth that is good for eating. My favorite things to eat are _____

_____ and _____.

I have special ears to hear.

9

I have special ears to hear all kinds of things. I like to hear _____, but I don't like to hear _____.

I also have very special hands. Hands can be especially nice when they are holding someone else's hand. I like to hold hands with _____

_____.

10

I also like to help with my hands. I especially like to help _____

_____.

And, I can't forget my special feet. I like my feet to take me to _____.

I can run faster than _____.

One of the most special things I have is a heart.

11

I also keep feelings about my favorite things in my heart. My favorite animal is _____.

Here is a picture kind of like my favorite animal:

12

My favorite people are _____.

The best thing anybody ever gave me is _____.

When I'm asleep, I like to dream about _____.

My favorite dream is _____

_____.

13

But, best of all, I like MYSELF – all of me!

BECAUSE-

I'm a very special person and I'm glad to be me!

Because I'm a very special person, I have a very special friend who comes to see me. My special friend is going to help me _____

_____.

14

Date: _____.

Some special things we did today that I liked were _____

_____.

Some special things that I would like to do next week are _____

_____

_____.

15

Something I wish I hadn't done the other day was _____

_____.

Today, I Feel

_____ (☺, ☹, 😐)

to be me.

16

Chapter Four:

Helping Children with Academic Skills

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Handbook for Volunteers Who Help Children Learn

Many children who are not succeeding in school can become achievers if they get extra attention and drill which is styled to meet their individual learning needs. They will benefit most from such extra help if it is given on a one-to-one basis or in a small group. Volunteers can help busy teachers to supply this extra attention and reinforcement to learning.

Volunteers who help children build academic skills need to know how children learn and some techniques which work well with the problem learner. This information is found in this handbook along with suggestions for activities which volunteers have used to help children succeed in learning.

Volunteers also need to know how the problem learner feels—what it's like to experience failure and frustration. All volunteers who work with children are urged to read NSVP's handbook, Effective Listening Skills, *which is used to train volunteers for Listener Programs.* *(See pages 38-44.)*

NSVP is grateful to its member programs whose materials were adpated for use in this section, notably the School Volunteer Program of Greater Miami and the School Volunteer Program of Worcester, Mass.

Children with special needs

School volunteers often work with children who have special learning needs. Sometimes a child's learning problems are so great that he must attend a special school or a special class within the neighborhood school. Most children with mildly handicapping conditions can be educated best in the regular classroom, because they are more *like* other children than *different* from them.

Handicapped children who are placed in a learning environment with their non-handicapped peers are said to be "mainstreamed." Mainstreaming, or placement in the "least restrictive environment," means that handicapped children may be educated with their non-handicapped peers to the "maximum extent appropriate." This is possible in varying degrees, depending on the needs of the child.

Some children spend their entire school day in a regular classroom and receive support services from a tutor or counselor. Other children spend a small portion of the school day in a resource room where they receive individual or small group help in building academic skills. Still other children attend a special class with other handicapped children for half or all of each day.

Many handicapped children have been called "learning disabled" or "mentally retarded." These labels sometimes lead an adult to assume things about the children without knowing the children or their capabilities. The label may cause the adult to think that a child can't be expected to learn certain skills. In some cases, the child's intelligence is normal or above, but problems in learning persist.

Each child is an individual with unique qualities. Each has a different personality, preferences, learning style, and sense of humor. Children who have the same handicapping condition (or label) may not exhibit the same characteristics or need the same kind of attention. Any one characteristic in isolation may not merit attention; it is the frequency, duration, and pattern of such characteristics which determine their significance. The volunteer, working under the direction of the teacher, can help by using learning strategies tailored to each child's needs.

The teacher-volunteer partnership

The teacher who requests the help of volunteers realizes that

they expand learning opportunities, facilitate more individualization of instruction, and add to the nurturing which creates a good climate for learning and growing. The teacher will draw on the volunteers' skills, interests, experiences, and career backgrounds in selecting activities which will help the children to reach their learning goals.

Although volunteers often create learning games and activities, it is the teacher's role to diagnose learning problems and prescribe strategies and activities to meet each child's needs. The teacher also gives the volunteer information about children's strengths and weaknesses and explains classroom routines and procedures, materials, holidays, and field trips. Most important is the teacher's ability to make the volunteer feel comfortable as part of the education team.

Volunteers help to provide the special pace, the reinforcement of skills, the individual attention and adult direction for different instructional methods which many children need. They give the teacher extra pairs of hands, eyes and ears.

How Volunteers Can Help

At the primary level, volunteers are often asked to help children learn the meaning of some of the Dolch Basic Sight Words before they are able to learn to read them—for example, the words *in, out, on, under, beside, front,* and *back*. The teacher may plan activities and ask the volunteer to help reinforce the word meanings using the methods she outlines. A simple activity may be the key to understanding a concept. For example, you may be asked to outline a child on a big sheet of brown paper to make a paper "copy" of him and help him find his *front, back,* and *side*. You may help him to identify body parts and articles of clothing, colors, and patterns.

The volunteer who works in a primary classroom may be asked to:

- dance with a child while a record plays a song such as "Hokey Pokey"—to improve the child's physical coordination;
- play on the floor with a child, perhaps in a modified game of "Twister"—to help a child learn to follow directions and identify colors;
- play card games or a board game in which the moves and directions reinforce concepts or skills;
- work at a chalk board to help a child draw lines or figures as he hears oral instruction;
- show a film or filmstrip to focus on special needs;
- work with a child at his desk, helping with a worksheet assignment;
- prepare learning materials and games.

The teacher may ask volunteers to help older children with (1) reading comprehension activities (distinguishing fact from opinion, finding the main idea, using context clues, drawing inferences and conclusions, getting the facts, detecting the sequence, looking for relationships, and finding the author's purpose); (2) study skills (outlining, taking notes, skimming, generalizing, previewing, summarizing, using sources such as maps, charts, graphs and time lines, or reference books such as encyclopedias, dictionaries and glossaries); and (3) writing skills (book reports, business letters, job applications, topic sentences, paragraph structure, punctuation and capitalization, rules of grammar and spelling).

Volunteers may also:

- take formal reading and arithmetic inventories;
- give tests and assignments to children who were absent;
- assist in preparing learning centers;
- read stories to students;
- type stories dictated by children;
- assist in play activities in the classroom;
- organize student work folders;
- play games to reinforce learning (such as variations of bingo or tic-tac-toe which drill addition and subtraction facts);
- operate audio-visual equipment—record players, tape recorders, film and filmstrip projectors;
- watch educational television programs with students and provide follow-up activities.

The staff of "Sesame Street" has produced a number of short segments (usually one to three minutes long) which are designed specifically for children with retarded development who have mental ages of three to five years. Some segments present physical activities based on the "Families Play to Grow" program of the Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr., Foundation. Others stress learning tasks, ways to strengthen self-esteem and social skills.

When programs are available to be shown in schools and when teachers find them appropriate, volunteers can be trained to observe which segments are helpful to some children and to reinforce the skills presented. They can also be used as a springboard for conversation between children and volunteers.

With older students, those in junior and senior high school, volunteers may be asked to assist with:

- reading comprehension activities;
- study skills and thinking skills;
- writing skills;
- other basic competencies, including consumer math.

Volunteers who work with problem learners can also give these kinds of help to older students:

- Assisting teachers, coordinators and counselors in areas of work-study, experiential learning, and employment:

  talking to students about opportunities and qualifications for jobs in the volunteer's area of experience;

  sharing with the teaching staff the requirements, performance skills, communication, safety, grooming,

and social skills needed by students who wish to be hired;

acting as a listener and adult friend to the students;

seeking out other adults in the community who are willing to offer employment or on-site learning opportunities to exceptional students;

- Reinforcing survival skills, helping with:

filling out forms for checking, savings, and charge accounts; employment applications; Social Security and taxes; voter registration forms;

helping to understand ballots;

reading road maps;

reading train and bus schedules.

Understanding problem learners

It is necessary to establish expectations as well as instructional goals to help *all* children learn. The child who has problems in learning needs specific short-term goals. The child should know these goals and know what he will be able to do when these goals are achieved. The teacher sets the goals and helps the volunteer to find the most appropriate strategies and materials to help the child reach them.

The expectations of the teacher and volunteer for the child should be realistic and positive. They should combine goals which the child can attain immediately as well as some which are more challenging. The volunteer's attitude should convey the expectation that the child will succeed.

Most problem learners feel frustrated when they fail to learn while others in the classroom do learn. If the child you work with did not learn the multiplication tables using his workbook and flash cards when most children *did* learn them, then the teacher will help you to find other ways which may prove more satisfactory for this child.

Children learn reading and arithmetic skills in certain sequences. The skills are usually taught in relation to the child's readiness and stage of development. In the regular classroom, instruction tends to be oriented to the grade level, geared to state guidelines and the curriculum of the school and school district. The child who has learning problems needs more individualized help which fits his learning style and needs.

Some children are slow to learn or have trouble organizing their time and planning work. Some may find it difficult to generalize. If a student learns that 4 times 2 equals 8, he may not realize that 2 times 4 equals 8, also. He may not comprehend that a tall, slender jar holds the same amount of water as a short, fat jar.

Some children cannot remember directions well. What they learn in one session may not be remembered to apply in the next session. A child may have such a lack of self-esteem that his frustration may cause him to have tantrums or misbehave when things don't go right. Some children are moody or impulsive. Some have an extremely short attention span. Others have poor body coordination and appear clumsy.

Many students do not learn to read in first grade. They may be considerably older when they are ready to read. This compounds the problems of learning arithmetic. These students may need to learn to listen and speak adequately before they can understand written symbols. They may also:

- need reinforcement of verbal, visual, and auditory skills through games and other learning activities;
- benefit from repetition and from reinforcing the information in different ways;
- rely on markers and other reading and math "crutches" longer than most children;
- need "hands on" experiences with manipulative materials to help them to understand a concept;
- find it easier to memorize than to try to understand;
- have trouble with working from left to right, following directions, or sequencing;
- have trouble with reversing numbers or letters—they may find it hard to tell *12* from *21*, or *saw* from *was*; they may write 3 as Ɛ and S as Ƨ.

How children learn

A child who has problems in learning may have trouble in one or more of these learning processes:

receiving information and stimuli—recognizing what is taken in through the senses of hearing, seeing, smelling, touching, tasting;

understanding—drawing conclusions, making connections, establishing relationships from what is seen, felt or heard;

expressing thoughts and feelings—using skills necessary to express verbally or by gesture or movement.

These processes are important because they are the basic elements needed for any learning to occur. The teacher is concerned not only with conveying academic subject matter (reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic, language, social studies, handwriting) but also with processes used in the learning of that subject matter. These processes help the learner to make personal sense of what is being presented. The child relates what is being taught to what he or she already knows or believes in.

If a child has a hard time remembering what is heard and can't put that information in order, the teacher will determine how the handicap influences the child's learning and then develop a learning plan to meet the child's needs. A child may have severe problems in understanding and using information which has been seen or heard. Tasks which are normally well within the ability of the child, which he might be expected to "pick up," may have to be taught. A child may receive information adequately through the senses and be able to understand it, but may be unable to express it in writing.

Many children cannot learn in traditional ways. They

must be taught in a different way which enables them to learn. This might be through their sense of sight, hearing, or touch. Or the child may have to be taught to compensate by using the stronger learning ability.

As you talk to the classroom teacher to prepare for your work with the children, you will often hear the words *perception* and *perceptual*. Perception is the ability to understand the information received through the senses. However, visual perception is not sight and auditory perception is not hearing. Sight and hearing are ways in which we *receive* the information; perception is how we *organize, associate,* and then *use* the information. Perception is needed to accomplish any task, no matter how simple or complex.

Learning is a combination of several active processes. A child can be helped to learn these processes. The rate of such learning depends on the range of experiences that the child receives in and out of school and on the child's natural talents and interests.

The way we use our senses influences how we learn best. We learn most easily and feel most successful in learning when we are allowed to use the learning style which draws on our strengths. If you learn best by reading information rather than by hearing it, the teaching technique which matches your preferred learning style will utilize written materials. If you learn best by working with a friend, the environment which matches your preferred style of learning will allow partners to work together.

Each person's style of learning depends on his strengths and preferences. The successful teacher and volunteer will discover each child's learning style and structure learning around that style.

The need to succeed

A child who has problems in learning usually experiences many frustrations, may have a poor image of self, and may have developed attitudes and work habits which perpetuate failure.

Think of yourself and the things you do well and those you don't do well. Imagine that you have to spend every day doing the thing you do least well, in the company of 20 or 30 other people who seem to excel at the task you can't manage. You are judged on the basis of how well you do the task you do least well. No matter how hard you try or how much time you put into the effort, you just don't seem to get any better; your results are still terrible.

Every day a child with learning problems must come to school and perform in a subject or area which is difficult, if not impossible, to accomplish well. All the other children in the third grade can read the book, but he can't. Other kids remember the times tables but she's spent ten times more effort and worked ten times harder and she still can't remember them. He's got plenty of good ideas but can't put them on paper the same way he can think them. All his papers come back with red marks all over them: INCORRECT! INCOMPLETE!

Because of the child's frustrations, poor self-image, and experiences of failure, the emphasis of the instructional program—for teacher and volunteer—must be a positive approach to the child's learning. More than anything, these

children need to succeed. They need to understand that they are not scholastic failures and that the accomplishment they crave is within their grasp. Your work with these children should be success-oriented, because once the child feels better about himself or herself, the academic work can be approached with new confidence.

Nothing succeeds like success—that is a basic principle of learning. The best guarantee that a person will be able to deal with difficulties and succeed in the future is that he has been successful in the past. Thus teachers should help volunteers to select learning experiences which provide success for each child each day.

When the child believes a task is impossible, he becomes frustrated and stops trying. When he sees the task as too easy, he has no desire to perform. The most suitable tasks are those which contain a good chance for success. Each child needs experiences which challenge and maximize genuine opportunities for success. The child who feels successful wants to tackle further tasks and challenges.

The learning environment

How can you as a volunteer create a good environment which will help the child learn? Sometimes a volunteer and a child have a quiet room in which to work. More often they work in a busy classroom.

You can help by making sure the desk or tabletop is clear of extra materials. The child should see only the materials needed for *one* activity. The child needs room to work, but without the distractions and clutter of extra books and papers.

Check to see if the child is in a comfortable position to work. Is there enough light? Is the desk the right size? Try to keep the work area free of distractions and away from busy

areas of the classroom, such as the pencil sharpener, water fountain, chatty group activities or games. Stay away from traffic areas affected by changing classes or groups of children going outside for physical education.

Do you and the child have all the materials you need before you begin to work? Can the child see and hear the material to be used? Usually the closer the child is to the work, the less distracted he will be by other things. A child who is to copy from the board should be close enough so that other activities or objects of interest are not between the child and the board. Maintain eye contact when you give directions. Be sure you have the child's attention.

Offer a variety of activities so that you can hold the child's interest. Any academic skill can be reinforced in countless ways. To a large extent, what makes the student-volunteer relationship successful is not any one type of academic technique but the one-to-one caring and the volunteer's persisting belief that the child can learn. If the child can concentrate on a task for only three or four minutes, don't plan a 15-minute activity. Break it into five three-minute sections and intersperse them with other work. Mix an activity using manipulative materials with a listening task, followed by one which permits the child to be physically active and one that is more relaxed. If one activity does not get a good response, try another.

Begin a learning activity at the point where the child will succeed. Plan tasks that can be completed successfully nearly all the time. Reinforce the material by reviewing previously taught lessons, but don't make it a boring repetition. Starting where the child can succeed paves the way for the new material to be learned, thus you bypass the "I can't!" frustration so many children experience.

If the child fails to learn the material or has a lot of trouble with it, ask yourself why. What was not understood? What didn't the child know? Perhaps the teacher will ask you to reinforce a skill the child has previously learned, or will help you to break the task down into smaller steps. The child may be more ready to learn the material when you return to it on another day.

The child needs to understand exactly what is expected. As you give instructions, try to demonstrate rather than just talk. Make the directions simple, brief, and meaningful. You may need to limit directions to only one or two steps at a time. Present the ideas in a concrete manner—*show* as you *tell*. Use objects and pictures. Too much talking confuses some children. If you are working on math, use sticks, beads, counters, or "color cues." Color cues use a color over and over to indicate the same concept. The color cue may be a red box to indicate a function, such as addition.

After you have given the directions and demonstrated them, ask the child to repeat or show you what is to be done. As the child begins to work, watch to see that it is being done correctly. You might say, "That's right. You've got it." If the work is incorrect, stop the child before much has been done. Review the directions again. Be patient and positive. Give immediate reinforcement to correct responses; thus you keep the child from practicing and reinforcing incorrect responses.

A child may have trouble finishing assignments. The old adage, "one step at a time," is helpful because it reduces the overwhelming ALL to manageable amounts of work. The child needs the reassurance of "one thing at a time" to cope with assignments. He may be overwhelmed by trying to keep track of assignments or organizing to get the work done. If written work is particularly hard, the child will need even more time to complete the work as pressure mounts.

Sometimes you may need to help the child get organized. Help by making a check list of assignments and pages. You might say, "First the math, then when that's finished, you can check that off and start on spelling." It may help to keep a folder with the papers TO DO in the right pocket, the completed work in the left, and a list clipped to the front of the folder. At day's end the child removes completed work and puts unfinished work back in the right pocket for the next day.

If possible, give the student only a small portion of work at a time. If there are 25 math problems, present the first five, then the next group, and so on. If the work is a dittoed page or a workbook sheet, you might cut the problems apart or cover the lower portion of the page while the child solves the first problems. This technique helps to reduce visual distractions as it relieves anxiety.

A child may need help in organizing work on the paper. You might fold the paper into columns or rule in pencilled guidelines to indicate where to start. Once you have set up a routine to organize the child's math papers, the child will be able to do it alone. The same idea can work for other assignments. Suggest that the spelling paper be folded into two columns and that a line be skipped between each word. Teach the child to remember to put the first and last name on the top line at the right side of each page, the date on the second line under the name. Helping the child develop a routine organization for papers clears away the time and confusion previously spent trying to figure these things out. The paper will look better, be more legible and more acceptable to both the child and the teacher.

As you correct the child's work, remember the importance of a positive approach and the "one thing at a time" advice. The child needs to feel successful. If the paper was written to develop creative writing skills, look for ideas. You will defeat the child's concentration on ideas if you circle all misspelled words and errors of punctuation and grammar. Later you can work to improve handwriting or spelling skills.

Remember to build on the child's strengths. If the child can state thoughts well orally, you might ask him, "Please repeat that slowly so we can remember it while you write it down just that way." Work with the child's weaknesses. One child may need extra time to organize and write assignments. Another may need shorter assignments or adapted

worksheets. A third may need to use "crutches" such as a number line or fingers for counting, or a marker to keep place while reading.

Many children need help to organize their use of time. You may want to try setting a time limit, such as ten minutes, to do a certain number of problems. The limit should not be threatening—just a reminder and aid to use of time. Some children, however, might object to a time limit or be upset by it.

Some children are experts with evasive tactics. One child may want to discuss yesterday's baseball game in detail or talk about family history in the middle of school work. Tell the child you will save time *after* the work is finished to chat, but keep him on task until the work is done. You might say, "Let's talk about that when we finish this." Or "If we finish this assignment quickly, we may have time to play a game or just talk."

Be sure to share your experiences with the teacher. If an activity went really well, let the teacher know; if one did not go well, the teacher may have some suggestions or observations. Perhaps the child was just having a bad day, or maybe the plans for the next lesson should be changed.

Providing feedback

Children are usually eager to share their joys and accomplishments with people who are important to them and to hear feedback, especially if that feedback is positive. Feedback consists of our words and actions and the child's interpretation of these words and actions. Realistic feedback gives the child knowledge about how he is doing, knowledge he needs in order to learn effectively.

Don't praise a child falsely. Children need encouragement and need to feel capable to succeed, but feedback that contains obviously false information does more harm than good. Instead of proving to a child that he is capable, it proves that you can't be trusted. Even when you sincerely praise his work after that, he won't know whether he can believe you.

The child who knows that he has trouble reading will not believe someone who tells him that he is a good reader. This type of feedback is harmful and will not help the child to gain a realistic picture of his performance. When the child's performance shows some effort and perhaps some gain, feedback can consist of comments such as, "I see how hard you are trying. Before long you will master the whole word list," or "Aren't you proud of yourself?"

Feedback is more likely to be "heard" and accepted if it is given immediately, in small amounts, when the person is "ready," and if it:

- concerns something the person can change, such as behavior;
- describes specific observed behavior; and
- is a comment about and not a judgment of the behavior.

The child's mistakes are some of the most important tools teachers and volunteers can use to help him learn. They give insights into how he learns, reveal his thinking, and show his ways of looking at things.

Many children fear making mistakes because they associate mistakes with disapproval and failure. Most children who are unsuccessful in school are told over and over that they are not achieving. Low grades, negative comments on school work, and the remarks of teachers and peers constantly remind them of failure, and so the children are not motivated to continue their efforts in academic areas.

Volunteers can encourage the child to work on academic skills by using his mistakes to help him learn in an accepting, non-threatening climate which is structured so the child can succeed. When a child makes a mistake, the volunteer should be supportive in pointing out the error. You might say, "The first problem is correct, but the second one isn't. Will you show me how you did both of them?"

More tips for tutoring

Nearly every school volunteer program uses trained volunteers to work as tutors with children in reading and math. Classroom teachers and subject matter specialists provide the training which gives volunteers confidence and competence in the subject areas.

Successful volunteer tutors use these techniques:

- At each session, present a simple task which you know (through the teacher) that the child can do. This will assure success, reinforce knowledge already acquired, and check the child's memory. Then proceed to the next task.
- Use as many concrete, manipulative materials as possible. This way you involve more of the child's senses in the learning experience. As you get to know the child you can plan activities which utilize his or her strongest sense for learning.
- Plan two or three activities to present the same information. For example, the Dolch list of 220 basic sight words may be learned from word cards, by writing the words in sand, by writing them on the board, by arranging anagram tiles, or by making the letters with yarn on a flannel board.
- Speak distinctly and correctly so that you provide a good example.
- Use appropriate audio-visual materials. A tape recorder can be used to test orally, and to let the teacher know a child's answers.
- Teach the child how to read the comics, what the balloons for words indicate. Simple, obvious information which you might take for granted may have to be explained.
- Introduce new material slowly. Introduce one new concept at a time. Repeat the material before you go on to a new concept.

- Plan your sessions with a child so the activities are related and occur in sequence.
- Adjust to the moods and needs of the student. You may have to change your approach or the materials in order to interest the child.
- Emphasize survival skills and practical use of information when you work with older students. Relate the lessons to their experiences and background.
- Keep copies of the student's work. Looking at them later can help the student to see the progress he is making.
- Plan a little time when the student is free to talk about anything on his mind. Let him know feelings are understood and shared. Respect confidences.

SUPPLEMENT I

Perceptual Problems—What Are They?

Perception is the ability to understand the information received through the eyes and ears, but visual perception is not sight *and auditory perception is not* hearing. *Sight and hearing are the ways in which we receive the information. Perception is how the mind recognizes and makes sense out of the information.*

Visual Perception (what the brain does with what is seen)

These are processes involved in the visual mode of learning:

1. Visual discrimination—the ability to see fine differences.
2. Form constancy—the ability to recognize a form or shape regardless of changes in position, size, color, and texture. (A chair is a chair, no matter where it is or what position it is in.)
3. Figure-ground—the ability to recognize a figure regardless of surroundings. To see one particular part without being confused or distracted by other parts.
4. Visual closure—the ability to identify or recognize visually something that is incomplete, or distorted.
5. Visual sequencing—the ability to store or give back in proper order a series of things seen.
6. Visual memory—the ability to remember and use things seen.
7. Visual association—the ability to relate similar forms or shapes.

You may also hear of *reversals, rotations,* and *visual distractability*. These are problems in the visual process, problems with the way the brain processes the information received through the eyes.

Auditory Perception (what the brain does with what is heard through the auditory channel, the ear)

The following processes are involved in the auditory mode of learning:

1. Auditory discrimination—the ability to distinguish slight differences in sound through listening.
2. Auditory figure-ground—the ability to focus on one sound or speaker regardless of background noise.
3. Auditory sequencing—the ability to store and give back, in the proper order, a series of things heard.
4. Auditory closure—the ability to identify auditory stimuli from incomplete or disrupted information.
5. Auditory memory—the ability to remember and use information received through the hearing channel.
6. Auditory association—the ability to relate or associate similar stimuli received through the hearing channel.

Body Perception (involving touch and movement)

Often the terms HAPTIC and KINESTHETIC are used to describe touch and body movement.

1. Body image—the concept and awareness of one's own body as it relates to surrounding space, other objects, and movement.
2. Directionality—understanding left, right, up, down, etc., in relationship to one's own body.
3. Laterality—the awareness and use of both sides of the body.
4. Dominance—the preferred use, and better performance, of one side of the body as compared to the other side.
5. Gross motor coordination—the ability to use the large muscles of the body with ease and confidence. Running, walking, throwing, catching, kicking, and balance are all part of this coordination.
6. Fine motor coordination—the ability to use the small muscles of the body with ease and confidence. Such activities include buttoning, cutting with scissors, and writing.
7. Hand-eye coordination—the ability of the hand and eye to work together so a certain task can be performed. These activities include tracing, coloring, writing, and cutting.

Language (the ability to deal with and interpret the symbols of speech, writing, and reading)

Aphasia—the loss of language; the inability to deal with the symbols of language.

1. Receptive aphasia—the inability to understand language spoken or given through other modes.
2. Expressive aphasia—the inability to use language as a means of expression:
   a. encoding—the ability to convert oral language into written symbols

b. decoding—the process of transferring written symbols to sound, and then blending them together to make a word. (Although this is reading, it does not include understanding or comprehension of the word.)

3. Associative aphasia—the inability to process, interpret, or relate words or concepts as language.

SUPPLEMENT II

Some Definitions: Reading

basic sight vocabulary—a list of words that comprise up to 75 percent of all those the child will encounter in his early reading vocabulary. This is often called the Dolch Word List.

blend—combining two or more letters into a sound in which each letter retains its individual sound. Example: br, st, pl, nk, scr.

chronological age—the number of years and months a person has lived.

color coding—a teaching technique which uses colors to highlight or distinguish different parts of a word, sentence, arithmetic problem or other activity.

consonant—sounds of the alphabet which include all letters except vowels (a, e, i, o, u, and sometimes y.) Since consonants are not easy to say in isolation, they must be pronounced carefully to the child. This provides a model for proper blending.

digraph—two letters which produce a single sound. Example: ch, sh, th, ai (as in *main*).

diphthong, or vowel blend—a sound made by gliding from one vowel to another in one syllable. Example: *oil.*

homogeneous grouping—placing of children with the same specific learning characteristics in groups. Also called *ability grouping.*

phonics—the teaching of speech sounds; the relating of language sound (phoneme) to the written symbol (grapheme).

reading readiness—accomplishment of levels necessary for a child to begin the reading process. (*Number readiness* is used in the math area.)

resource class—a class for children who need special support in some academic areas.

reversal—letters written or perceived backwards so they are incorrect or represent another letter. Example: *b* for *d*, *p* for *q*.

rotation—turning around of letters. Example: *p* for *d*.

sight words—words which the child should recognize and speak automatically without pausing to analyze them.

syllabication—breaking a word into its separate word parts (syllables).

vowel—the sounds of the letters a, e, i, o, u and sometimes y. Fine auditory discrimination is necessary to hear the differences in "short" vowels: *a* as in cat, *e* as in hen, *i* as in pig, *o* as in hot, and *u* as in cup. The "long" vowels are easier—they "say their name" as in g*a*te, w*e*, f*i*nd, n*o*, and c*u*be.

word attack skills—the ability to take an unfamiliar word and use knowledge of letter sounds, syllables, and other clues to pronounce the word successfully.

Some Definitions: Math

abacus—a device used for calculating which usually involves sliding beads along a wire.

attribute—a characteristic of an object such as *round* or *red.*

cardinal number—a numeral or number used for telling how many.

counters—objects such as sticks or bottle caps used in counting or in performing the four basic mathematical operations: addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division.

Cuisenaire Rods—color coded rods of ten varying lengths, sometimes used to help the child understand numbers and their relationships, also used in mathematical operations.

digit—any of the ten number symbols, 0 through 9.

number line—a line with numerals at regular intervals, which children may use in adding and subtracting.

number sentence—a numerical equation ($2 + 5 = 7$) or inequality ($3 + 6 > 7$).

numeral—a written number symbol such as 3.

ordinal number—a number indicating position in a series or order, e.g., first, second.

set—a class of objects or numbers possessing like attributes, e.g., a set of blue marbles.

word problem—a mathematical problem stated in words.

Volunteers who are reading tutors will enjoy two fine publications available to NSVP members at discount:

TUTORING IS CARING, *by Aline Wolf. An excellent manual, 216 pages of games and activities which motivate, plus many ideas for successful tutoring. Includes photographs and drawings and color-coded pages of vowel sounds.*

TUTOR! A HANDBOOK FOR TUTORIAL PROGRAMS, *by Lillie Pope. 142 pages.*

How Volunteers Can Help

Activities to enhance learning

The following activities are mong those which volunteers may be asked to use in working with young children who may have learning problems.

A. PERCEPTION ACTIVITIES

VISUAL PERCEPTION

Pegboard designs. Reproduce colored visual geometric patterns to form the design on a pegboard using colored pegs.

Parquetry blocks. Have the child copy patterns using parquetry blocks.

Block designs. Using wood or plastic blocks that are all one color, or have faces of different colors, have the child match geometric shapes and build copies of models.

Finding shapes in pictures. Find all the round objects or designs in a picture. Find all the square objects, too.

Bead designs. Copy or reproduce designs with beads on a string, or simply place shapes in varying patterns.

Puzzles. Have the child put together puzzles that are teacher-made or commercially made. Subjects such as people, animals, forms, numbers, or letters can be cut into pieces to show functional parts.

Classification. Have the child group or classify geometric shapes of varying sizes and colors. The figures may be cut out of wood or cardboard or be placed on small cards.

Rubberband designs. Have the child copy geometric configurations with colored rubber bands stretched between rows of nails on a board (sometimes called geoboards).

Worksheets. Ditto sheets—find the objects or shapes that are different, match the same objects, find objects in varying spatial positions, and separate the shapes and figures from the background. The use of an acetate cover is helpful if the ditto is to be re-used.

Matching geometric shapes. Place shapes on cards and play games requiring the matching of these shapes. Collect different sized jars with lids. Mix the lids and have the child match lids with jars.

Playing cards. A deck of playing cards provides excellent teaching material to match suits, pictures, numbers, and sets.

Letters and numbers. Visual perception and discrimination of letters is an important reading readiness skill. Games that provide opportunities to match, sort, or name shapes can be adapted to letters and numbers.

Letter bingo. Bingo cards can be made with letters. As letters are called, the child recognizes and covers up the letters.

Finding missing parts. Use pictures from magazines and cut off functional parts of the pictures. The child finds and fills in the missing parts from the group of missing parts.

VISUAL MEMORY

Expose a collection of objects. Cover and remove one of the objects. Show the collection again, asking the child to identify the missing object.

Expose a geometrical design, letters, or numbers. Have the child select the appropriate one from several alternatives or reproduce the design on paper.

Expose a short series of shapes, designs, or objects. Have the child place another set of these designs in the identical order from memory. Playing cards, colored blocks, blocks with designs, or Mah-Jongg titles are among the materials that might be used for such an activity.

Tachistoscopic exposure or flash cards can be used for recall of designs, digits, letters, or words that have been seen.

AUDITORY PERCEPTION

Listening for sounds. Have the children close their eyes and become auditorily sensitive to environmental sounds about them. Sounds like cars, airplanes, animals, outside sounds, sounds in the next room, etc., can be attended to and identified.

Recorded sounds. Sounds can be placed on tape or records and the child is asked to identify them. Planes, trains, animals, and typewriters are some of the sounds that may be recorded.

Teacher-made sounds. Have the children close their eyes and identify sounds the adult makes. Examples of such sounds include dropping a pencil, tearing a piece of paper, using a stapler, bouncing a ball, sharpening a pencil, tapping on a glass; opening a window, snapping the lights, leafing through pages in a book, cutting with scissors, opening a drawer, jingling money, or writing on a blackboard.

Food sounds. Ask the child to listen for the kind of food that is being eaten, cut, or sliced: celery, apples, carrots.

Shaking sounds. Place small hard items such as stones, beans, chalk, salt, sand, or rice into small containers or jars with covers. Have the child identify the contents through shaking and listening.

AUDITORY ATTENDING

Attending for sound patterns. Have the child close his eyes or sit facing away from the adult. Clap hands, play a drum, bounce a ball, etc. Have the child tell how many counts there were or ask him to repeat the patterns made. Rhythmic patterns can be made for the child to repeat. For example: slow, fast, faster.

Sound patterns on two objects provides a variation on the above suggestion; e.g., use a cup and a book to tap out sound patterns.

DISCRIMINATION OF SOUNDS

Near or far. With eyes closed, the child is to judge what part of the room a sound is coming from, and whether it is near or far.

Loud or soft. Help the child learn to judge and discriminate between loud and soft sounds.

High and low. Same as above.

Find the sound. One child hides a music box or ticking clock and the other children try to find it by locating the sound.

Follow the sound. The adult or a child blows a whistle while walking around the room. The child should try to follow the route taken through listening.

Blindman's Bluff. One child in the group says something, like an animal sound, sentence, question, or phrase; the blindfolded child tries to guess who it is.

Auditory figure-background. To help a child attend to a foreground sound against simultaneous irrelevant other noises, have him listen for pertinent sounds against a background of music.

AUDITORY AWARENESS OF PHONEMES OR LETTER SOUNDS

Initial consonants. Have the child tell which word begins like milk. Say three words like, "astronaut, mountain, bicycle." Ask the child to think of words that begin like *Tom.* Find pictures of words that begin like *Tom,* or find pictures of words in magazines that begin with the letter T. Find the word that is different at the beginning: "paper, pear, table, past."

Consonant blends, digraphs, endings, vowels. Similar activities can be devised to help the child learn to perceive auditorily and discriminate other phonic elements.

Rhyming words. Learning to hear rhyming words helps the child recognize phonograms. Games similar to those for initial consonants can be used with rhyming words. Experience with nursery rhymes and poems that contain rhymes is useful.

Riddle rhymes. Make up riddles that rhyme. Have the child guess the last rhyming word. For example: "It rhymes with book. You hang your clothes on a _____."

Sound boxes. A box, approximately the size of a shoe box, can be used for each sound being taught. Put the letter representing the sound on the front, and collect toys, pictures, and other objects for the children to place in the appropriate box.

Auditory blending games. Have the child identify objects or answer questions when you speak the name of any object by separating the individual phonemes. For example: "p-e-n" or "b-a-ll." "What is your n-a-m?"

Same or different. Say pairs of words or pairs of nonsense words and ask the child to determine if they are the same or different; e.g., tag-tack; big-beg; singing-sinking; shin-chin; lup-lub.

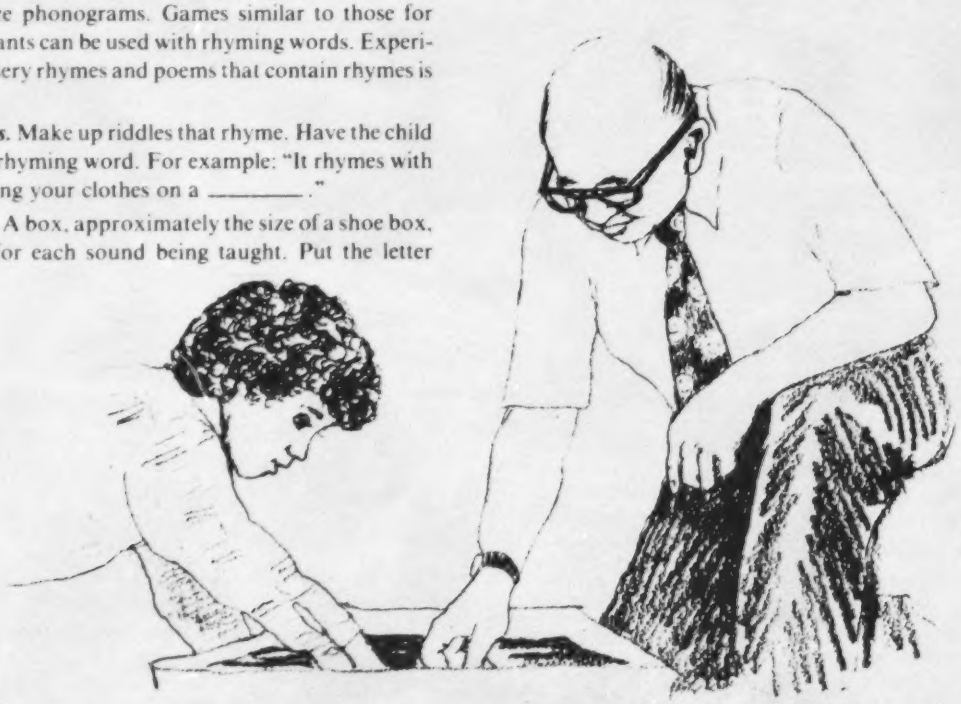
Hearing syllables. Have the child listen to the pronunciation of multi-syllabic words and determine the number of syllables in each word. Clapping or identifying the vowel sounds heard helps the children determine the number of syllables.

AUDITORY MEMORY

Do this. Place five or six objects in front of the child and give a series of directions to follow. For example: "Put the green block in Jean's lap; place the yellow flower in John's chair; and put the orange ball into Joe's desk." The list can be increased as the child improves in auditory memory.

Following directions. Give the child several simple tasks to perform. "Draw a big red square on your paper; put a small green circle underneath the square, and draw a black line from the middle of the circle to the upper right-hand corner of the square." Such activities can be taped for use with earphones at a listening center.

Helping the child hold in mind a list of numbers or single words. Start with two and ask him to repeat them. Gradu-



ally add to his list as he performs the task. At first a visual reminder in the form of a picture clue may be helpful.

Give a series of numbers and ask the child to answer questions about the series. "Write the fourth one: 2-8-1-9-4." Other directions could include the largest, smallest, closest to five, last, the one nearest your age, etc.

Ask the child to watch a television program and remember certain things. "Watch *The Wizard of Oz* tonight and remember all the different lands that Dorothy visited."

Going to the moon. "I took a trip to the moon and took my space suit." The next child repeats the statement but adds one item.

TACTILE AND KINESTHETIC PERCEPTION

Feeling various textures. Have the child feel various textures such as smooth wood, metal, sandpaper, felt, flocking, sponge, wet surfaces, foods, etc.

Touch boards. These boards are made by attaching different materials to small pieces of wood. The child touches the boards without looking and learns to discriminate and match the various surfaces.

Feeling shapes. Various textures cut in geometric patterns or letters can be placed on boards and felt, discriminated, matched, identified through tactile perception. These shapes can also be made of plastic, wood, cardboard, clay.

Feeling temperatures. Fill small jars with water to touch in order to teach warm, hot, and cold.

Feeling weights. Fill small cardboard spice containers with beans, rice, etc., to different levels. Have the child match weights through shaking and sensing the weights.

Smelling. Put materials of different scents in bottles (cloves, cinnamon, vinegar, etc.). Have the child match the smells.

Tracing on palm. Trace designs, numbers, or letters on the child's palm. Ask him to reproduce or to identify the shapes that he has felt.

Identifying letters by feel. Have the child learn to identify shapes, numbers, and letters by feeling them.

Grab bag. Put various objects in a bag or box. Have the child recognize each object through the sense of touch.

Arranging sizes by feel. Arrange geometric shapes of varying sizes according to size while blindfolded.

Feel and match. Match pairs of objects by feeling their shape and texture. Use a variety of textures pasted on pieces of wood, masonite, or plastic.

B. BODY IMAGE AND BODY AWARENESS

Point to body parts. Ask the child to point to the various parts of his body: nose, right elbow, left ankle, etc. This activity is more difficult with the eyes closed. Children can also lie down on the floor and be asked to touch various parts of their bodies. This activity is more difficult if done in a rhythmic pattern—using a metronome, for example.

The robot man. A man made from cardboard, held together at the joints with fasteners, can be moved into various positions. The children can move the limbs of the robot on command and match the positions with their own body movements.

Simon Says. This game can be played with eyes open and with eyes closed. The person who is IT gives the other player a series of quick simple instructions; the other player is to perform all the actions which "Simon Says" but none unless the words "Simon Says" are used first. IT tries to trick the other into doing an action. An example: "Simon says clap your hands;" player does it. "Simon says slap your knee;" player does it. "Simon says roll your eyes;" player does it. "Touch your elbow!" Player should not do it.

Puzzles. Puzzles of people, animals, objects, etc., can be cut to show functional portions of the body.

What is missing? Use pictures with body parts missing. Have the child tell or draw what is missing.

Life-size drawing. This can be made of the child by having him lie down on a large sheet of paper and tracing an outline of him. He fills in and colors the clothes, and the details of the face and body.

Games. Games such as Looby Loo, Hokey-Pokey, Did You Ever See a Lassie, develop concepts of left, right, and body image.

Pantomime. The children pantomime actions that are characteristic of a particular occupation, such as bus driver driving a bus, a police officer directing traffic, housekeeper cooking, etc.

Following directions. Instruct child to put his left hand on his right ear, and right hand on his left shoulder. Other instructions might be to put his right hand in front of his left hand; turn right, walk two steps, and turn left.

Twister. Make rows of colored circles on the floor, or use an oilcloth or plastic sheet, or use the commerical game. Make instruction cards: put left foot on green circle and right foot on red circle.

Estimating. Have the child estimate the number of steps it will take him to get to a goal.

Facial expression. Have the child look at pictures of people and tell if a person is happy, sad, or surprised. Tell a story and ask the child to match the appropriate facial expression to the story. How does the person in the story feel?

C. GROSS MOTOR ACTIVITIES

Forward walk. Have the child walk through a straight or curved path marked on the floor to a target goal. The path may be wide or narrow, but the narrower the path, the more difficult the task. A single line requiring tandem walking (heel-to-toe) is more difficult than a widely spaced walk. A slow pace is more difficult than a running pace. Walking without shoes and socks is more difficult than walking with shoes.

Backward walk. Have the child walk through the same course backwards.

Sideways walk. Have the child walk a predetermined course sideways to the right, one step at a time; then to the left, one step at a time; finally walk sideways with one foot crossing over the other.

Variations. Have the child walk the above with arms in different positions carrying objects, dropping objects along the way such as balls into containers, or with eyes focused on various parts of the room.

Animal walks. Imitate the walks of various animals; elephant walk (bend forward at the waist, allowing arms to hang down, taking big steps while swaying from side to side; rabbit hop (placing hands on the floor, do deep knee bends, and move feet together between hands); crab walk (crawl forward and backward face up); duck walk (walk with hands on knees while doing a deep knee bend); worm walk (with hands and feet on the floor, take small steps first with feet, then with hands).

Moon walk. Imitate the leaping kangaroo-like steps of the astronauts on the moon.

Steppingstones. Place objects on the floor for steppingstones identifying placement for right foot and the left foot by color or the letters R and L. Child is to follow course by placing the correct foot on each steppingstone.

Box game. The child has two boxes (the size of shoe boxes), one behind and one in front of him. He steps into the front box with both feet, moves rear box from behind to front and then steps into that. He can use different hands to move boxes and use alternating feet. Move toward a finish line.

Line walks. Draw lines in colors on the floor. Lines can be curved, angular, or spiral. Also use a rope placed on the floor and have child walk along the side of the rope.

Ladder walk. Place ladder flat on the ground. Have the child walk between rungs forward, backward, hopping.

Skipping.

FLOOR ACTIVITIES

Angels in the snow. Have the child lie down on the floor on his back and move limbs on command. Begin with bilateral commands: i.e., move feet apart as far as possible, move arms along ground until they meet above the head. Follow with unilateral commands: move left arms only, move left leg only: finally give cross-lateral commands: move left arm and right leg out.

Obstacle crawl. Create an obstacle course with boxes, hoops, tables, barrels, chairs, etc., and have the child cover a predetermined course, going *through, under, over* and *around* various objects.

BALANCE BEAM ACTIVITIES

The balance beam can be a flat board, commercially purchased, or made from a two-by-four. It can be of various widths; the narrower the width, the more difficult the activity. You can use a section of two-by-four measuring eight to twelve feet long. Each end of the board is fitted into a bracket which serves as a brace and prevents the board from tipping over. The board can be set flat with the wide surface up and set on its edge with the narrow surface up.

Walking forward. Have the child walk forward slowly across the board. He can walk with the normal stride or a tandem walk (heel-to-toe). The task is more difficult with bare feet than with shoes on.

Walking backward. Walk backward while keeping balance.

Sideways walking. Walk across board sideways starting with the left foot, then with the right. One foot could slide to the other or cross over the other.

Variations. Variations and more complex activities for the balance beam can be devised by adding activities such as turning, picking up objects on the board, kneeling, dropping objects such as balls or beanbags into containers while going across, following oral or recorded commands while on the board, walking while blindfolded or with eyes focused on an object.

THROWING AND CATCHING

Throwing. Throwing objects at targets or to the adult or other children can be performed with balloons, wet sponges, beanbags, yarn balls, and rubber balls of various sizes.

Catching. Catching is a more difficult skill than throwing, and the child can practice catching the above objects thrown by the volunteer or other children.

D. EYE-HAND COORDINATION

Tracing. Trace lines, pictures, designs, letters, or numbers on onionskin paper, plastic, or stencils. Use directional arrows, color cues, and numbers to help the child trace the figures.

Water control. Carry and pour water into measured buckets from pitchers to specified levels. Use smaller amounts and finer measurements to make the task more difficult.

Cutting with scissors. Have the child cut with scissors, choosing activities appropriate to his needs. Easiest are straight short lines marked near the edges of the paper. Then cut along straight lines across the paper. Some children might need a cardboard attached to the paper to help guide the scissors. Cut out marked geometric shapes, such as squares, rectangles, and triangles. Draw a different color line to indicate change of direction in cutting. Cut out curving lines and circles. Cut out pictures. Cut out patterns made with dots and faint lines.

Stencils or templates. Have the child draw outlines of patterns of geometric shapes. Templates can be made from cardboard, wood, plastic, old x-ray films, or containers for packaged meat. Two styles can be made: a solid shape (more difficult to trace around) or frames with the shape cut out.

Lacing. A cardboard punched with holes or a pegboard can be used for this activity. A design or picture is made on the board and the child weaves or sews with a heavy shoelace, yarn, or similar cord through the holes to follow the pattern.

Paper and pencil activities. Coloring books, readiness books, dot-to-dot books, and kindergarten books frequently provide good paper and pencil activities for fine motor and eye-hand development.

Clipping clothespins. Clothespins can be slipped onto a line or a box. Children can be timed in this activity by counting the number of clothespins clipped in a specific time.

Copying designs. Children look at a geometric design and copy it onto a piece of paper.

CHALKBOARD ACTIVITIES

Dot-to-dot. The child connects two dots on the chalkboard with a line. Dots can be placed in various positions and in varying numbers and the child must plan the lines of connection.

Circles. The child can practice making large circles on the board with one hand, two hands, clockwise and counter-clockwise.

Geometric shapes. Do similar activities to those described above with lines (horizontal, vertical, and diagonal), triangles, squares, rectangles, and diamonds. At first the child can use templates to make these shapes at the board; later he can copy the shapes from models.

Letters and numbers. Child practices letters and numbers on the chalkboard.

E. LANGUAGE

Children learn language through progressively more difficult skills: listening, speaking, and writing.

Names of objects. To help a child understand names, use actual objects, such as a ball, pencil, doll. Sometimes exaggeration and gesture is needed to help the child who has a severe receptive disorder understand the meaning of the word that symbolizes the object.

Verb meanings. It is more difficult to teach the concept of a verb than the name of an object. Verbs such as hop, sit, walk, can be illustrated with the performance of the activity.

Pictures. Pictures are useful in reinforcing and reviewing the vocabulary that has been taught.

Concepts of attributes. Words that describe the attributes of objects can be taught by providing contrasting sets of experiences that illustrate the attributes. For example: rough—smooth; pretty—ugly; little—big; hot—cold. Both concrete objects and pictures are useful in teaching attributes.

Development of concepts. By combining experiences with particular objects, the child is helped to understand the concept beyond the object itself. In learning about the concept of a chair, the child is shown a kitchen chair, an upholstered chair, a folding chair, a lawn chair, a doll chair, and a rocking chair. Through experiences with many objects, the child develops the concept of chair.

Classes of objects. An even broader classification of objects may be made and labeled with a word. The word *food* refers not to any single type of food but to all foods. Children, therefore, could be taught "objects that are food" and could be asked to remove from a display any "objects that are not food."

UNDERSTANDING SENTENCES

Directions. Simple directions given in sentences can give the child needed experiences in understanding sentences. Eor example: "Give me the blue truck," or "Put the book on the table."

Find the picture. Line up several pictures. Give a sentence about one picture and ask the child to point to the correct picture. This exercise can be made harder by adding more sentences to describe the picture.

Function words. Linguists refer to *function* or *structure* words as the words that show structural relationship between parts of a sentence and grammatical meaning. They include noun determiners, auxiliary verbal forms, subordinators, prepositions, connectors, and question words. These words cannot be taught in isolation; they must be taught within a sentence or phrase. Words such as on, over, under, behind, in front of, beneath, inside, in, can be taught by placing objects in a box or under a chair while saying the entire phrase to convey the meaning.

Riddles. Have the child listen to the sentence and fill in the word that fits. "I am thinking of a word that tells what you use to go down a snowy hill." (sled)

Department store. The game of department store gives the child the opportunity to use naming words. One child plays

the role of the customer and gives orders to another child who is the clerk. The clerk collects pictures of the items ordered and gives the orders to his customer while naming them.

Rapid naming. Give the child a specified length of time (one minute) to name objects in the room. Keep a record of the number of words named to note improvement. Pictures can be used, having the child name objects in the pictures.

Word combinations. Some words can best be learned as part of a group. When one member of the group is named, the child may be helped to remember the second: paper and pencil, boy and girl, hat and coat, cats and dogs. Series may also be learned in this fashion: days of the week, months of the year.

F. MATH

Manipulative materials. An abacus, beans, sticks, play money, rulers, and measuring instruments can help the child to understand math concepts and perform number tasks.

Matching and sorting activities. To develop number concepts, the child needs to focus on and recognize a single object or shape. Ask the student to search through a collection of assorted objects to find a particular type of object—a red block or bead in a box of colored beads or blocks; an almond in a bowl of nuts; a circle from a bag of cardboard shapes.

Shapes and spatial relationships. Puzzles, pegboards, and formboards help the child to focus on shapes and their relationships. Auditory cues and verbal tips may help the child to find and fit a missing piece. Discuss the shape the child is seeking and suggest that he feel the edges for tactile cues.

Concepts of size and length. Ask the child to compare and contrast objects of different sizes to help him understand the concepts of smaller, bigger, taller, shorter, etc. Collect objects (washers, screws, and paper clips, for example) and ask the child to arrange them by size. Have him estimate the sizes of objects by guessing whether certain objects will fit into certain spaces.

Pairing and one-to-one correspondence. The child must understand one-to-one relationships before he can learn to count. Ask the student to match a pair of objects—a cup and saucer, or a row of pegs just like the row you have arranged on a pegboard. Or ask him to set a table with one cookie on each dish, or to give one pencil to each person in a group.

Counting. The child who can repeat 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 does not necessarily understand what those words mean (the concepts of one-ness, two-ness, etc.). Help the child to understand counting through motor activities: clap three times, jump four times, tap on the table two times; place one peg in the hole, clip two clothespins on the line, string three beads onto a pipe cleaner. Use auditory clues to reinforce visual counting by asking the child to close his eyes and listen to the counts of a drum beat, then mark once for each sound and count the marks. Visual stimuli, such as pointing to objects, are not always helpful since the child may count erratically, skip objects or say two numbers for one object.

Serial order and relationships. As the child learns to count, ask him to tell the number that comes after 6 or before 5 or between 2 and 4. Ask him to indicate the first, the last, or the third of a series of objects. Ask the child to arrange measured quantities by size, weight or volume.

Visual recognition of numbers. The child must learn to recognize the printed numbers—7, 8, 3; the words seven, eight, and three; and how to integrate the written forms with the spoken symbols. Color cues may be used for the child who confuses one number with another. Have the child match the correct number with the correct set of objects (made of felt, cardboard, or sandpaper).

Number lines. The child can walk on number lines and number blocks to help him understand the symbols and their relationships to each other:

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Measuring. The child can develop concepts of measurement by pouring sand, water, or rice from a container of one shape or size to a different container. Emphasize the differences of amount by using measuring cups. Help the child to estimate quantities. Measurement is an easy way to introduce fractions.

Counting cups. Make a set of containers, such as cups, with a different numeral on each. Ask the child to put the correct number of buttons, screws, or bottle caps in each marked container.

Helping the older student

Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is a frequent problem for the adolescent reader with special needs. He may recognize words or be able to sound them out phonetically and pronounce them, but he still may fail to understand their meanings. Lack of comprehension is especially serious in later school years when the student is not able to read on grade level. How can volunteers help? They can:

- Find high interest, low reading level books and magazines.
- Discuss materials read with the student; help him to find the main idea and to rephrase the story in simple words.
- Record textbooks on tape so that the student may listen to the tape as he follows along in his textbook. Such help enables the student to keep up with class assignments as he improves reading skills. *NOTE: The teacher must request permission from the text-*

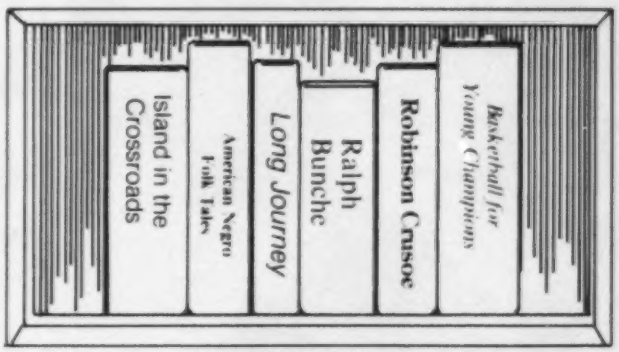
book publisher before any textbook can be taped; publishers will usually give permission for such usage with disadvantaged students.

- Help the student to organize his work and break it down into more manageable parts.
- Encourage the student with learning problems to become a volunteer reading tutor. Research shows that those who tutor younger children in basic skills often make great improvement themselves. (See NSVP Information Bank Entry 1, which describes Boston's Two-Way Tutoring Program.)
- Read two different accounts of an event to the student. Ask him to tell you whether he has enough facts to determine which account is correct.
- Type up a story or article on the student's reading level. Cut the paragraphs apart. Ask the student to put them back in order.
- Give the student practice in distinguishing statements of fact from statements of opinion.
- Help the student to ask questions about the book or article he is about to read. This helps him to look for answers as he reads.
- If the subject matter the student is reading relates to history, help him to make a time line which helps him understand the events in relation to other things he knows about.
- Help the student to understand "long ago" by making a time line which places in perspective events he understands—from cave man through the discovery of America, the Revolutionary and Civil Wars, World Wars I and II, inventions, presidencies, the year of his birth.
- Interview the student about a topic he knows a lot about; ask him to interview you. Tape record the interview.

Ways to Encourage Reading

Volunteers, parents and teachers can find ways to encourage the older student to read, even though he may not associate reading with pleasure. Techniques include these:

- Help him find interesting books on his recreational reading level (he knows nearly all the words—material is below his grade reading level). The teacher or librarian can provide lists. Publishers of paperback books list many titles for students who read below grade level; the section may be called "for reluctant readers."
- Read an exciting part of a book aloud to the student. Stop reading in the middle of the action. Ask if he would like to read the rest of the book by himself or together.
- Discuss with the student books he has enjoyed—ask him to tell you about a section he liked a lot, why he thinks the author wrote the book.
- Choose a book which you think will interest him. Alternate reading pages or paragraphs. When you are encouraging the student to read for pleasure, never ask him to sound out a word he doesn't know. If he pauses, wait a bit to see if he can come up with it, but supply the word if he doesn't. Ask questions about what you have read together.
- Read aloud a newspaper or magazine article, or a chapter of a book that you think he will enjoy. He can concentrate on thinking as you read. Reading aloud with a friend is enjoyable for all of us.
- Encourage the student to keep a list of books he reads. Some students enjoy keeping track of books read by printing the title of each book on a strip of colored construction paper which is then pasted on his "bookshelf" (drawn on a sheet of colored paper). Each strip represents the spine of a book.



DAN'S BOOKSHELF 1979

Thinking Skills

Volunteers can bring high interest materials to stimulate the student's ability to solve problems and think through consequences. For example:

- Cut a comic strip apart (one which has an obvious sequence) and ask the student to put the boxes back in correct order.
- Paste blank paper over the words in the balloons of a comic strip and ask the student to observe the actions pictured and fill in the words.
- Prepare columns such as those below and ask the student to connect the cause with the possible effects:

a 20-inch snowfall	breaks leg
sun shines warmly	monkey escapes
man falls on ice	snowman melts
cage door left open	schools close

or to connect parts with wholes:

- Ask the student to categorize a group of words, such as Buick, banana, pansy, beaver, zinnia, Ford, goat, orange, Cadillac, apple, marigold. Or make a chart with category headings at the top and ask the student to fill in words for those categories.
- Give oral instructions for how to do or make something, such as a paper box or airplane. See if he can follow your directions. Give help if he needs it.
- Describe how to play a game. Ask him to teach other students.
- Ask the student to read a newspaper article which you think will interest him, then to write a headline which summarizes it. Compare his headline with the newspaper's headline.
- Present a problem situation and ask the student to resolve it, or read a brief story but stop before the end and ask him to predict what will happen.

Language Experience Story

The language experience approach is often used to help young children learn to read. It is also useful for the older

student who has a problem with reading. The volunteer capitalizes on the student's interests and experiences and uses the student's own words to write a brief story. The student's familiarity with the subject and vocabulary helps him to read.

To write a language experience story, the volunteer talks with the student about one of his interests—a favorite television program, a trip he has taken or would like to take, a hobby or sport. Or the volunteer may use a picture to start the conversation, or ask the student to finish a sentence such as "If I could visit any place in the world, I would . . ." or, "If I won a lot of money in a contest, I would . . ."

After he talks out the topic of his choice, the volunteer suggests that he dictate a story about it as she writes it down. The story should be about four or five sentences. Ask the student to read each sentence aloud as you finish writing it. Decide on a title for the story.

Before the volunteer meets with the student the next time, she can type the story and make at least two copies. She may develop a variety of activities to use with the story dictated by the student, such as:

- Ask the student to underline one of the words. If he can't find it, tell him which line it is in or what letter it starts with. If he still can't find it, show it to him.
- Ask the student to find other words which begin with the same letter as the word he located—or any other words the volunteer names.
- Ask the student to copy some of the words and read them back to you.
- Play a game of concentration with the words. Ask the student to make two cards for each of six words: two cars may say *truck*, two will say *fast*, and two will say *highway*, etc. Turn the 12 cards over and take turns turning them up, two at a time. A player who turns over two cards which are just alike keeps those cards and gets another turn. Let the student take the game home at the end of the session.
- Give the student one copy of the story to take home. If he can write or print easily, ask him to recopy it in his own handwriting. One of the copies should be put in a notebook so that the student can later re-read each story he has dictated—or he can share his "book" with family or friends.

Study Skills

Volunteers can help a student learn how to research a topic of interest. The volunteer tutor has time to help the student pursue an interest, such as deep-sea diving or hang gliding. In the library they can use a variety of sources to gain information, including:

tables of contents	maps	card catalog
indices	charts	encyclopedias
glossaries	diagrams	Readers' Guide
appendices	graphs	almanacs

Volunteers can help students to appreciate how a graph or table presents information in ways to show comparisons and contrasts. Many students skip over such visual aids, perhaps because no adult has ever shown them how to learn from them. The student might create his own graph, chart, or map, using information available to him. For example, he could graph the height and weight of ten classmates.

Volunteers can also help students learn skills which make their study time more effective, skills such as note-taking and skimming and previewing. Students need to learn to

vary their speed in reading different types of information, depending on the purpose of the reading.

The volunteer can bring to the classroom other types of reference works used in everyday living: local maps and bus schedules, mail order catalogs, newspaper advertisements, television listings, a telephone directory and the yellow pages, a cookbook, and an operating manual for an automobile.

To expand the student's vocabulary, the volunteer can present a game which uses common words of warning, such as CAUTION and FLAMMABLE, words which give directions such as ENTRANCE and LEFT TURN ONLY, and other words the student needs to know throughout his life. (See Essential Vocabulary, pages 68-69.)

All children need practice to learn words used in following written directions, words such as underscore, opposite, suffix, and parallel, for they cannot follow the instructions unless they understand the words and concepts they convey. Volunteers can assist teachers in giving children practice using these words. (See Words Used in Following Directions, page 68.)

Many students can profit from extra practice with dictionary skills—learning to alphabetize, find synonyms and antonyms, use symbols for pronunciation, abbreviate.

Math

Volunteers have the time to help make learning an active process, one that invites students' participation and involvement and makes learning relevant to everyday life. The subject of mathematics offers many opportunities for active learning, for so many math concepts can be taught and reinforced through objects. For example:

Dominoes teach set theory, matching two dots to two dots, etc.

Dice can be used to demonstrate probability.

Cuisenaire rods show relationships.

Number lines can confirm learned number facts.

Pie charts demonstrate the meaning of fractions.

Calculators help ensure a failure-free climate for learning.

A child learns mathematical concepts on the playground when he sees a larger child balancing a smaller one on the see-saw; in his own kitchen when he uses measuring cups and spoons for recipes; in sports when he learns percentages through batting averages. Volunteers can help the student see the relevance of geometry by discussing angle shots in ping pong or billiards, and can make two-digit addition interesting by helping a student to score a strike followed by a spare in bowling.

Because the volunteer makes possible more individualization of instruction, the student gets more opportunities to investigate problems on his own, using objects—learning the concept of division by cutting a cardboard strip into smaller strips of equal size, learning liquid measurements and their relationships by pouring water into containers of various sizes.

Learning with objects that can be moved and stacked and regrouped is more vivid, more pleasurable, and more likely to be remembered than learning from a page which pictures a child moving objects. Active learning provides the student with instant feedback and reinforcement of learning.

Many a problem learner has trouble interpreting workbook or textbook problems in which a situation is described with words and symbols. But a student may succeed with a problem when he has objects to move. For many children the concrete experience must come before they can understand an abstract concept.

The student who has not succeeded in completing assignments from textbooks or work sheets may gain confidence in his ability to estimate, solve problems and make predictions when he is actively involved in learning. He can make a mistake when dividing objects equally and learn from the error. The student who is permitted to use a calculator to check his multiplication problems gets reinforcement of correct answers after using his own thought processes. The confidence he gains leads to greater competence.

Career Planning

Few high schools have enough counselors to give students enough time and attention to meet their needs and answer their questions. In many urban schools the ratio may run as high as 800 to 1.

> "Young people are simply not getting the career guidance and counseling that they need so very very much and yet there is an excess supply of counseling and guidance expertise in every community in this country. It is easy for me to put together, at least in my thinking, that every young person would be identified with someone in the community who would like very much to provide one-to-one guidance and counseling. In every community the complete potential to provide that kind of assistance exists and it is just a matter of working out the delivery system."
>
> —Former Secretary of Labor Willard Wirtz at NSVP's Seventh Annual Conference, March 1, 1978

If most young people need more help from the community in career planning, just think what an added burden this is for the adolescent who has learning problems!

Every community has a rich reservoir of potential volunteers who can:

- speak to classes and to individual students about their careers, and invite the students to tour their places of work;

- work with students in adult-youth service projects which will enhance self-image and provide opportunities to explore careers;
- welcome students to part-time jobs and mini-apprenticeships to give students a realistic view of an occupation;
- staff a career counseling center supervised by the guidance department; volunteers assist students in self-evaluation, decision-making, career exploration, and in selecting college or other post-high school training (NSVP's Information Bank Entry 31 describes such a program in eight San Francisco high schools).

The Dolch List

A typical long-term task which a volunteer might be asked to help a child to master is the Dolch Basic Sight List—220 words which make up 70 percent of the words found in first grade readers and 65 percent of those in second and third grade readers.

The words are simple to adults but often are confusing and difficult for young children to learn. These words are usually not the main noun and verb words of a sentence but

are the small language words that "fill in" and give meaning to sentences. Nearly three-fourths of them follow regular spelling patterns but some do not follow phonics patterns. Many of the words are abstract and cannot be pictured. Some represent a concept rather than a thing—for example, *in, above,* and *about.* Words on the list are singular and plural; some are possessive or show time—words such as *his, they, these, whose,* and *when.*

Most children with learning problems will not learn these 220 words in a day or a week. For some children, learning to read the Dolch sight words, or even a part of the list, may take a year or more. Learning to read, speak, spell, and use these words correctly may be part of a child's curriculum through many school years. The words will be learned slowly and the child may need a great deal of reinforcement along the way. A great variety of teaching materials and methods may be used to help a child learn these words and concepts.

Many volunteer tutors print these words on small cards, using large manuscript printing. The cards can then be used, a few at a time, in games or sorting activities. You may want to introduce two Dolch words that a child does not know and use them in a game with six words he does know. The Dolch Basic Sight Words are listed here in 11 groups of 20 words each. You may want to use them with the child in even smaller units. Some volunteers list the Dolch words in a spiral notebook and check off those which the child can recognize correctly and promptly. When the child can read the word quickly during three different sessions, you may consider that he has learned the word and put a coding dot or happy face beside it.

220 Dolch Basic Sight Words

Many volunteers put these words on small cards so they can be used in games and in sorting activities. The child's teacher will tell you whether to use large manuscript printing or to use cursive handwriting. With a child who is learning cursive but knows manuscript printing, you might use both, one on each side of the card.

GROUP ONE		GROUP TWO	
a	on	are	it
at	out	as	its
get	ride	by	know
has	soon	call	may
him	ten	did	one
in	the	fast	run
into	two	find	so
jump	up	go	three
little	was	he	too
me	what	her	yes

GROUP THREE		GROUP FOUR	
away	ran	after	I
be	red	am	if
big	saw	blue	like
carry	see	came	look
down	stop	can	not
five	that	cold	old
fly	this	come	over
no	to	for	play
of	we	funny	will
put	you	had	who

GROUP FIVE		GROUP SIX	
an	help	all	sit
and	here	around	thank
black	his	don't	then
brown	she	eat	there

but	some	from	us
do	under	give	want
going	went	is	when
good	with	make	where
green	yellow	my	would
have	your	said	write

GROUP SEVEN

ask	once
best	own
clean	read
draw	shall
far	small
gave	them
hot	today
kind	very
long	were
myself	work

GROUP EIGHT

about	never
ate	only
better	pick
could	right
drink	show
first	start
goes	these
how	together
laugh	walk
made	which

GROUP NINE

always	now
been	or
bring	pretty
does	say
every	six
four	tell
grow	think
just	upon
light	wash
much	why

GROUP TEN

any	off
before	our
buy	pull
done	seven
fall	sleep
full	their
hold	those
keep	use
live	well
must	wish

GROUP ELEVEN

again	new
because	open
both	please
cut	round
eight	sing
found	take
got	they
hurt	try
let	warm
many	white

How to Find Out if the Child Has Learned the Basic Sight Words

To review a child's mastery of the Dolch basic sight words, you can type or print the 220 words four to a row, such as:

1.	by	a	at	it
2.	cut	can	come	came
3.	as	are	ask	away

Then show the child one line at a time, using a paper or ruler above and below so he sees only:

2. cut can come came

Read one of the words and ask the child to point to that word in the line. Circle each word he reads correctly:

2. cut can (come) came

On another day use the same sheet but ask a different word in each line.

Checklist of basic information

Teachers may use the following checklists to determine whether children have mastered these types of basic information. When they find that a child needs help in one or more of these areas, they may ask volunteers to use or help develop materials to teach these concepts or facts. The lists are included here through the courtesy of Mrs. Alice Carter, Coordinator, and Mr. Douglas Carter, Assistant for Instruction, Department of Exceptional Children, Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Public Schools, N.C.

LEVEL ONE

Colors—Knows the colors: red, blue, brown, orange, purple, black, green, and yellow; can read and spell the color words.

Family—Knows parents' names, address and phone number, names of family members, individual family responsibilities, safety rules in the home, different types of family recreation, and recreation with friends.

Home—Knows names of rooms of house, names of furniture, different types of houses.

Seasons—Knows four seasons (summer, fall, winter, spring), types of clothing worn, and physical changes in weather.

Holidays—Knows why and how we celebrate: Hallowe'en, Columbus Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Chanukah, July 4, New Year's Day, Valentine's Day, Washington's and Lincoln's birthdays, Easter, Memorial Day.

School—Knows name of school; location of cafeteria, special classes, nurse's office, bus pick-up location; jobs and responsibilities of school helpers: principal, nurse, janitor, secretary, bus driver, cafeteria help, librarian, music teacher, art teacher, gym teacher.

Body—Knows names of basic parts of body and how they help us—eyes, ears, feet, teeth, nose, etc.

Language Arts—Can make wants known, uses words and sentences, names common objects, converses freely with teacher and in group discussions, can write manuscript letters (ABC's), recognizes manuscript letters, can say and write full name.

Health—Knows how doctors and dentists help, how to care for hair, hands, face, ears, nails, clothes, teeth.

Safety—Knows what to do during fire drills, safety rules in schools (buses, halls) and classroom (use of pencils, rulers, scissors), safety signs (stop, school, railroad, traffic light).

Manual Skills—Can tie shoes, dress and undress; knows

how to use basic tools in the classroom (crayons, pencils, paints, scissors, paste, rulers); can clean, dust, erase blackboards, wash tables and chairs, clean up spilled foods, sweep floor, wash and dry dishes; can sew buttons on and use needle and thread; can set table, do simple cooking, clean up.

Social Living— Can wait turn, listen when others talk, share toys, play quietly, play well with others, respect rights and property of others, is courteous in greetings, requests, replies, and has good work habits such as working quietly, following directions, finishing work, and making good use of time.

Laterality and Directionality— Knows up and down, in and out, on and off, high and low, near and far, left and right, over and under, beneath, narrow and wide, next, close and closer, middle, above and below, top and bottom, across, front and back, first and last.

Arithmetic— Understands size, weight, and height; knows big and little, tall and short, long and short, round and square, circle and circles, curved and straight, heavy and light, thick and thin, less than and more than, taller and shorter, more and most, tallest and shortest, bigger and smaller, large and small.

Motion— Knows slow and fast, slower and faster.

Time— Understands concepts of beginning and end, first and last, before and after, early and late, fast and slow, on time, night and day, winter and summer, morning and afternoon, noon.

Amount— Knows concepts of few and many, empty and full, whole and part, each, none, pair, all and some, a tablespoon, teaspoonful, cupful, glassful, jarful, pailful, handful, boxful, and group of objects.

Counting— Can count from 1 to 5, 1 to 10, 1 to 50, 1 to 100, by 10's to 50, by 10's to 100.

Writing Numbers— Can write numbers by ones through fifty.

Ordinals— Recognizes and knows meaning of ordinals (first through fifth) and meaning of first and last.

Temperature— Knows hot and cold, warm and cool.

Number Sequence— Knows numbers in order to 100, knows the number before and the number after.

LEVEL TWO

Neighborhood— Knows and can write address, knows difference between city and rural, knows types of houses and apartments, knows neighborhood helpers.

Food— Knows food groups and can name and categorize food into groups, knows food helpers, knows appropriate foods for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, knows appropriate food stores.

Clothing— Knows types of cloth (wool, cotton, silk, etc.) and sources of them, knows types of clothing (dress, coat, shirt, etc.), knows appropriate clothing for seasons and weather; knows types of clothing stores.

Community Helpers— Knows names of helpers (firemen, policemen, etc.) and their jobs, can identify helpers' pictures.

Transportation— Knows types of land, air, water transportation and can recognize names of them; knows appropriate transportation and can recognize pictures of all.

Recreation— Knows proper places to play in neighborhood and safety rules during play activities; knows recreational activities according to season and weather.

Arithmetic— Can write numbers to 50, to 100, can add and subtract 5, 10 and 20.

Calendar— Knows days of week and can write them; knows months and can write them, can write daily date; knows four seasons; knows holidays, their importance and meaning.

Time— Knows and can write hour and one-half hour, knows hour hand and minute hand, knows day and night, morning and afternoon, can apply time to special subjects.

Measurement— Knows inch, foot, yard; 1, 1/4, 1/3, 1/2 cup; tablespoon, 1, 1/4, 1/2 teaspoon; ounce and pound; pint, quart, gallon.

Money— Can recognize types of coins, knows values of coins and dollars, can apply money to cost of lunch, milk, etc.

Language Arts— Listens to and follows directions; can tell a story in complete sentences; can dramatize; responds well to writing of experiences, stories and news; can use a telephone; can make up short sentences; can write stories; knows use of capital letters, periods and question marks; knows alphabet, can spell Dolch words.

Social Living— Is responsible (does jobs well in classroom, can do errands, takes good care of school materials and personal belongings); cooperates and shares; is a good sport in games, considerate to others, honest, truthful and dependable.

Health— Has good posture, is physically fit, gets proper sleep, has clean body and neat, clean clothes, follows good grooming habits and has good eating habits.

Manual Skills— Can do simple cooking with instructions, knows proper table setting, has good table manners, can do simple sewing, keeps room and desk neat, can cut well and paste neatly, can print on wide-lined paper.

Reading— Recognizes words and knows word meanings, recognizes main ideas, perceives sequence of events, reads for comprehension, notes details and can recall specific details, can make judgments about stories, works independently, approaches reading period with pleasurable anticipation, has read independently many stories from other books.

LEVEL THREE

Transportation—Knows layout of community, types and purposes of different kinds of transportation, knows jobs in this field.

Food—Knows types of food to eat each day, knows and understands jobs related to the food industry, knows layout of grocery store and jobs available in food stores and in food preparation, knows costs of foods, understands the reason for difference of preparation.

Clothing—Knows why different clothing items are worn, knows in what stores to shop, knows and understands different fabrics, can care for clothing, knows the layout of a clothing store.

Social Living Skills—Knows and obeys safety rules, school and classroom rules; knows responsibility and care of public property; cooperates with peers; knows community leaders and their jobs; respects the property of others; understands and uses relevant manners and etiquette (can make introduction, accept and return favors, say "Excuse me," etc.); shares with others; respects authority; understands classes and bell schedule; understands criticism as a means of improvement; is truthful and honest; remains calm in emergency; is enthusiastic, interested in people and activities outside class; takes complaints to proper authority; is dependable and proud of accomplishments; competent in running errands; respects classmates, classmates' and school property; is sociable to classmates and people in authority; understands family and relationships; gets along with family and neighbors; helps out at home.

Health—Practices good grooming and personal cleanliness, has good posture and good food habits, takes pride in self-improvement.

Arithmetic—Can add units column to 20, over 20; can add units column and 10 column without and with carrying; can add unit, 10 and 100 columns; can subtract same as above, can understand and uses concepts of 1/4, 1/3, 3/4 and 1/2.

Calendar—Knows seasons, months, weeks, year and days; can read and write dates; knows about national holidays, knows days of week and can spell and abbreviate them; knows months of year and can spell months and abbreviate; understands concept of a week being 7 days and concept of the work week; knows that there are four weeks in a month and that some months have five weeks; knows that 365 days make one year; knows concept of Leap Year and that 366 days = Leap Year; knows Leap Year comes every four years; knows 12 months = one year; knows how many days in each month; knows important holidays and the dates of each; understands meanings of night, evening, day, morning, afternoon, noon, midnight; understands concept of six months (half year, semi-annual); understands concept of three months (one-fourth year, quarterly); and understands concept of 3/4 year (nine months).

Time—Knows hour and minute hand, and minutes before and minutes after; can follow a time schedule with some guidance, understands AM and PM; can read and write time and follow schedule by the clock; knows one minute equals 60 seconds, 60 minutes equals one hour, 24 hours equals one day, 15 minutes equals one quarter of an hour, 20 minutes equals one-third of an hour, 30 minutes equals half an hour and 45 minutes equals three-quarters of an hour; understands dawn and dusk, sunrise and sunset.

Money—Knows place value of money, can add money in place value, can make change for dollar, can add bill for total value, understands relationship of pennies, nickels, dimes, quarters, half-dollars, and dollars to other amounts, understands relationship of bills, can add and subtract money properly, knows concept of relative values (15c = one dime and one nickel, for example), recognizes paper money.

Language Arts—Listens to and repeats stories with accuracy, can tell of events and happenings, uses correct sentence structure, speaks quietly and clearly, listens attentively to others, concentrates on discussion, follows oral and written directions, can write original short sentences and do daily written work.

Reading—Can read own name, birthdate, and address, city, county, state, streets of city, country; names of mother, father, sisters and brothers; names of classmates, principal, teacher, and school; can read Dolch words and stories on own level; can find friends' names, doctor, and dentist in telephone directory and can read directory's classified section; can read newspaper for weather, clothing and food ads, entertainment, and specific news items; can use dictionary and do other functional reading.

Reading Skills—Reads to find answers, answer questions intelligently, reads short letter or note, reads contractions, finds known words within unknown words, knows synonyms and homonyms.

Writing—Writes names legibly; birthdate, complete address, city, county, state, country, streets in city; names of

parents, classmates, sisters and brothers, teacher, school; Dolch words; answers to prepared stories.

Writing Skills - Forms letters of alphabet legibly and correctly, writes complete sentences, uses capitals correctly; uses commas, periods, prefixes, and suffixes, writes short social letter and addresses envelopes correctly, writes contractions.

Basic concepts

Teachers may ask volunteers to help young children to understand the basic concepts of space, quantity, time and relationships. The following list is from the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Public Schools in North Carolina.

Space

top	between	beside
through	nearest	in front
away from	corner	beyond
next to	behind	round
inside	row	flat
middle	after	line
separated	center	follow
left	side	join
in order	beginning	straight
second	below	big - small
third	forward	tall - short
right	above	long - short
farthest	not first or last	wide - narrow
around	bottom	fat - thin
over	under	

Quantity

few	as many	tall - short
most	zero	long - short
whole	medium-sized	wide - narrow
widest	separated	fat - thin
some	pair	light - heavy
not many	equal	any
second	third	every one
several	least	enough
almost	not first or last	
half	big - small	

Time

after	not first or last	now
beginning	nearest	past
always	farthest	long - short
never	middle	fast - slow
second	between	early - late
third	next to	start - stop
separated	follow	begin - finish

Miscellaneous

different	change	light - heavy
alike	loud	with - without
other	open - close	dark - light
matches	soft - hard	
skip	easy - hard	

Words used in following directions

Some children do not do well on tests because they do not understand the words used in giving directions. Volunteers can help children understand concepts, processes, and word meanings. Many of the words commonly used in giving directions are listed below.

add	divide	missing	seventh
after	dotted	multiply	silent
alike	draw	ninth	silently
aloud	end	opposite	singular
alphabet	ending	order	sixth
alphabetical	erase	over	space
answer	estimate	page	spaces
answers	example	paint	spell
antonym	fifth	paper	spelling
around	fill in	paragraph	start
array	first	part	stop
before	fold	paste	subtract
begin	folder	phrase	suffix
beginning	fourth	picture	tenth
behind	glue	plural	third
below	hold	prefix	top
beside	homonym	question	trace
blank	horizontal	read	twice
bottom	how	rhyme	under
box	in between	rhyming	underline
circle	in front of	right	vertical
color	last	ring	what
column	left	row	when
corner	line	same	where
cross out	make	say	which
cut	mark	second	who
difference	match	section	why
different	middle	sentence	
direction	miss	sentences	

Essential vocabulary

Volunteers can help students to understand the meaning of these commonly used words which warn or give instructions. (From Corlett T. Wilson in *The Reading Teacher*, Vol. 17, No. 2, November, 1963)

Adults Only	Condemned
Antidote	Construction Zone
Ask Attendant for Key	Contaminated
Beware	Curve
Beware of the Dog	Danger
Boys	Dangerous Curve
Bridge Out	Dead End
Bus Only	Deep Water
Bus Station	Deer (Cattle) Crossing
Bus Stop	Dentist
Caution	Detour
Closed	Dim Lights
Combustible	Dip

Doctor (Dr.)
Do Not Block Walk (Driveway)
Do Not Cross, Use Tunnel
Do Not Enter
Do Not Inhale Fumes
Do Not Push
Do Not Refreeze
Do Not Use Near Heat
Do Not Use Near Open Flame
Don't Walk
Down
Drive Slowly
Dynamite
Elevator
Emergency
Emergency Vehicles Only
Employees Only
End Construction
End 45
Entrance
Escalator
Exit
Exit Only
Exit Speed 30
Explosives
External Use Only
Falling Rocks
Fire Escape
Fire Extinguisher
First Aid
Flammable
Found
Four-way Stop
Fragile
Freeway
Garage
Gasoline
Gate
Gentlemen
Girls
Handle with Care
Hands Off
Help
High Voltage
Hospital Zone
In
Information
Inspection Station
Instructions
Keep Away
Keep Closed at All Times
Keep Left (Right)
Keep Off (The Grass)
Keep Out
Ladies
Lane Ends
Last Chance for Gas
Left Lane Must Turn Left
Left Turn Only
Left Turn on This Signal Only
Live Wires
Loading Zone
M.P.H.
Mechanic on Duty
Men
Men Working
Merge Left (Right)
Merging Traffic
No Admittance
No Checks Cashed
No Credit
No Diving
No Dumping
No Fires
No Fishing
No Hunting
No Left Turn
No Loitering
No Minors
No Parking
No Passing
No Pets
No Right Turn
No Right Turn on Red
No Smoking
No Standing
No Stopping
No Swimming
No Trespassing
No Turns
Not for Internal Use
Nurse
Office
One Way—Do Not Enter
Open
Out
Out of Order
Pedestrians Prohibited
Playground
Poison (Poisonous)
Police (Station)
Posted
Post No Bills
Post Office
Private
Private Property
Proceed at Your Own Risk
Pull
Push
Railroad
Restrooms
Resume Speed
Right Lane Must Turn Right
Right Turn Only
Road Closed
Road Ends
Safety First
School Zone
Shallow Water
Shelter
Slide Area
Slippery When Wet
Slow Down
Slower Traffic Keep Right
Smoking Prohibited
Speed Checked by Radar
Steep Grade
Step Down (Up)
Stop
Stop Ahead
Stop for Pedestrians
Stop Motor
Taxi Stand
Thin Ice
This End Up
This Lane May Turn Left
This Side Up
Traffic Circle
Truck Route
Turn Off Lights
Up
Use before (date)
Use in Well Ventilated Area
Use Low Gear
Use Other Door
Violators Will Be Prosecuted
Walk
Wanted
Warning
Watch Your Step
Wet Paint
Winding Road
Women
Yield
Yield Right of Way

Appendices

APPENDIX I

Definitions

Some of the definitions below seem complicated, but they are the accepted federal definitions:

Due Process—In relation to PL 94-142, due process refers to a set of procedures which ensure fairness by guaranteeing that a handicapped child and his parents have an opportunity to participate in decisions relating to (a) identification of the child as handicapped; (b) educational placement; and (c) evaluation of program and progress.

Individualized Education Program (IEP)—"a written statement for a handicapped child that is developed and implemented" according to specified regulations which include:

(1) when IEP's are to be developed and implemented;
(2) who participates in the development of IEP's;
(3) considerations for parent involvement; and
(4) the contents of IEP's.

(adapted from the Federal Register, August 1977, Sec. 121a.430-49)

Learning Disabilities—"Specific learning disability" means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations. The term includes such conditions as perceptual handicaps, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia. The term does not include children who have learning problems which are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor handicaps, of mental retardation, of emotional disturbance, or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage.

(from the Federal Register, December 1977)

Least Restrictive Environment—The educational placement in which a handicapped student is educated with non-handicapped peers "to the maximum extent appropriate."

(adapted from the Federal Register, August 1977, Sec. 121a.550)

Mainstreaming—Placing handicapped students in the least restrictive environment.

Mentally Retarded—"Mentally retarded" means significantly subaverage general intelligence functioning, existing concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior and manifested during the developmental period, which adversely affects a child's educational performance.

(from the Federal Register, August 1977)

Adaptive behavior means the ability to adapt to and control one's environment; the *developmental period* is the time from conception to about age 16.

NOTE: The National Association for Retarded Citizens defines a mentally retarded person as one "who from childhood experiences unusual difficulty in learning and is relatively ineffective in applying whatever is learned to the problems of ordinary living."

APPENDIX II

NSVP Information Bank entries

Many successful projects of NSVP member programs are described in the NSVP Information Bank. Among the Information Bank entries which are relevant to this project are the following:

IB-1 Two-way tutoring, by Peggy McKibben, which describes how high school students in Boston, many with low reading scores, tutor younger students and increase their own reading skills.

IB-5 One volunteer and one student, by Fiora Houghteling. A volunteer in Oakland, Calif., used the language experience approach with a 14-year-old non-reader. She describes how they both learned.

IB-11 Recruiting and placing college volunteers, by Norman Stahl. College students can give your school volunteer program much, but to succeed in recruiting, placing and retaining them, you must be aware of their special needs and expectations.

IB-17 Early identification and intervention project. The New York City School Volunteer Program launched a project in 1974 to screen young children and give follow-up assistance to those who might not succeed in reading.

IB-27 I'll be bad today. Will you see me? by Elaine Samans. An elementary guidance counselor describes a Listener Program in West Chester, Pa.

IB-31 Volunteers in career and college information,

by Jim Gordon, director of a program in eight San Francisco high schools in which volunteers help students answer questions about careers and college selection.

IB-36 Who cares for the child? by John W. Alden. The function of the family has eroded, and today's child has less contact with caring adults than ever before. School volunteers have a unique opportunity to fill the emotional needs of children.

APPENDIX III

Other NSVP Publications

School Volunteer Programs: Everything you need to know to start or improve your program—a 36-page booklet on the ABC's of school volunteerism.

In-Service Training Models—Eight workshop outlines to train teachers in effective involvement of volunteers; contains 33 pages of handouts which may be reproduced to give to participants.

Handbook for Teachers—a 24-page booklet for teachers who want to learn effective management techniques for working with volunteers and paraprofessionals.

Helping Children Learn—At School and at Home—a 36-page booklet which contains three sections of this resource manual: Effective Listening Skills, Handbook for Helping Children Learn, and Activities to Enhance Learning.

Academic Skill Activities—26 pages of ideas for making learning fun, stimulating and relevant; two game boards are included.

Volunteers in Education: Future Public Policy—includes statements of support for school volunteers from President Carter, former Commissioner of Education Boyer, former Secretary of Labor Willard Wirtz, Governor Hunt of North Carolina, and other leaders. Issues include business involvement in school volunteer programs, volunteers in career planning, older citizens as school volunteers, the economic implications of volunteers in education.

Public Relations Tools for School Volunteers—a 40-page primer on PR for volunteer coordinators.